Visitor Center Manager's Handbook

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Visitor Center Manager's Handbook

Table of Contents

Preface--Energizing A Renaissance in Interpretation !
Abstract
Executive Summary
Methodology
Literature Review

Visitor Center Manager's Handbook

Visitor Centers Can Inspire !

Creating Magical Atmospheres

Visitor Centers Speak With Many Voices

Universal Accessibility

Training for Excellence in Interpretation

Budget Stretching Strategies

Volunteers

Visitor Center Management Tools

Conclusion

Appendices

Preface

Energizing
A Renaissance in Interpretation

Contents

Renaissance !

Leadership in Center Management

What's in This Handbook

Handbook Objectives

How the Handbook is Organized

Handbook Limitations

Handbook Goal-- Energizing a Renaisance in Interpretation

References

Preface

Energizing A Renaissance in Interpretation

Renaissance I

Throughout the National Forests, visitor center managers are faced with an exciting challenge. The challenge is an opportunity to:

1. effectively share relevant messages with local, national and international visitors. (Ham, 1993).
2. relate our messages to whole concepts. (Dick, 1992) (Tilden, 1957) (Galperin, 1992).
3. become universally accessible. (Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990)
4. become models of excellence in facilities and performance. (Laverty, 1991).

This all amounts to the beginning of a "Renaissance of Interpretation in the Forest Service" (Coutant, 1992) and a challenge to interpreters everywhere. Even considering the reality of reduced budgets or other constraints, we can, through creativity and a passion for excellence in visitor center management, promote new levels of appreciation for natural landscapes and heritage sites. (See Appendix A for a listing of National Forest visitor centers.)

How the Handbook Evolved:

This Handbook evolved out of discussions with interpreters from many agencies and organizations across the country. A need was seen to gather a range of philosophical and practical ideas into one document in order to aid interpreters and visitor center managers in better running their programs. During the latter part of 1992 and early 1993, the support of the Forest Service and the Recreation Short Course at Clemson University allowed the Handbook to become a reality.

This Handbook:

The handbook explores the important issues of:

--theme (message) driven visitor centers
--continuing to achieve architectural and universal program accessibility along with "message accessibility".
--promoting visitor centers that speak effectively with "many voices"
--training programs which promote excellence among interpretive staff
--budget and staffing strategies for stretching budgets through elements such as partnerships, volunteers, etc.
--additional "tools" to aid in center management

Handbook Objectives:

1) The Handbook affirms the importance of interpretation and the role visitor centers play as interpretive centers which speak with many voices.

2) The Handbook defines and discusses selected issues in visitor center management.

3) The Handbook draws into one document, from a diverse range of sources, many useful tools, strategies, and resources for managing excellent visitor center programs.

How the Handbook is Organized:

In each of the major topical areas, the importance of the issue is discussed, then examples are given to demonstrate how various centers have successfully addressed them or brainstorm lists are started to identify potential solutions. Recommendations are made and references are listed for further information. Additional selected reference materials and contacts are included in the Appendices.

Handbook Limitations:

Recognizing that each center is unique in purpose, size, complexity and management, this handbook does not attempt to be a "how to" for all centers, answering every question which might arise in visitor center program management. It does, however, address many of the issues

central to the success of visitor center programs and stimulates thinking for developing more effective visitor center programs.

Leadership in Center Management:

Leadership as visitor center program managers requires a blending of many skills (supervisory skills, management skills, etc) with a passion for the work of interpretation. (Corky McReynolds, 1992) It is critical that visitor center managers promote and inspire excellence in our programs, making our important messages accessible to all. In so doing, we can realize the great potential our visitor centers have as centers not only for orientation and information sharing, but for interpretation and inspiration as well.

Handbook Goal:

The goal of this handbook is to significantly increase the effectiveness of visitor center programs in promoting appreciation, awareness and respect for our earth's natural and heritage areas. It is hoped that by gathering and sharing information, this handbook will help reduce the tendency for visitor center managers to "reinvent the wheel" each time the same critically important questions and issues arise. While the handbook is focused primarily on National Forest visitor center programs in the U.S., it may also be useful to others with interest in the management of visitor centers.

Just as the European Renaissance of the 14th through 17th centuries witnessed a flowering of the arts and literature, we, as visitor center managers and supporters of interpretation have the opportunity to energize a new flowering of interpretation as we move into the 21st century !

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Abstract

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TITLE: Visitor Center Manager's Handbook

ABSTRACT: This Handbook promotes excellence in visitor center program management. While not attempting to resolve all the issues that arise in center management, it does look closely at six major areas of concern:

* theme (message) focused visitor centers
* visitor centers that speak effectively with "many voices"
* universal program accessibility
* training for excellence in interpretation
* budget stretching strategies
* additional "tools" to aid in center management

It is the aim of this document to demonstrate that through more effective management of our visitor center programs, an increasing number of visitors can develop a new appreciation, awareness, and respect for our earth's diverse natural places and heritage areas.

Keywords: visitor center, visitor center management, interpretation, thematic interpretation, interpretive training, learning styles, accessibility, volunteers, partnerships.

Executive Summary

Title: Visitor Center Manager's Handbook

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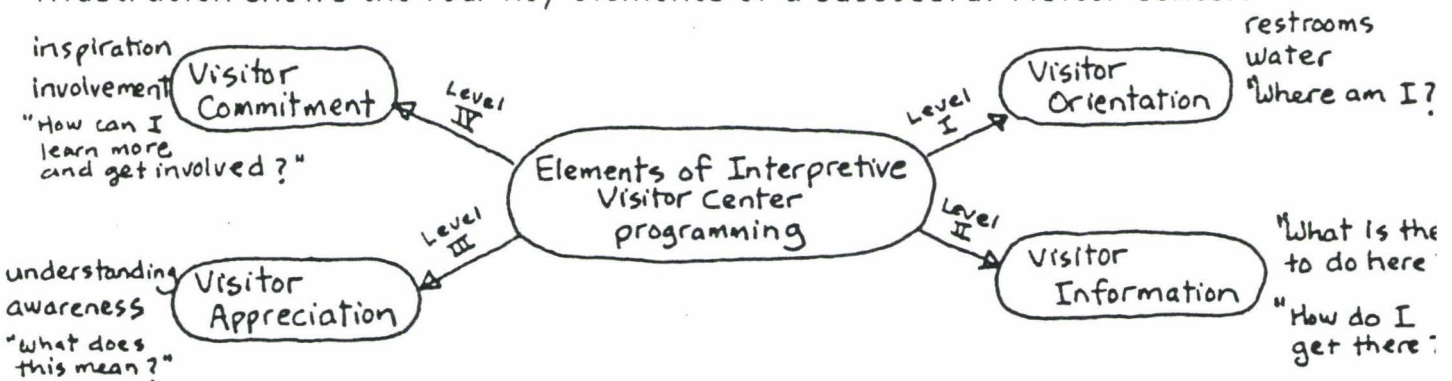
Summary:

Throughout the nation, hundreds of visitor centers have been established to orient visitors and to intrpret areas of special interest. The Forest Service currently manages more than 50 centers and is planning as many as 76 more. To date, there has been no guide for visitor center managers which addresses key elements of program management. This Handbook will facilitate information sharing betweeen visitor centers and reduce the tendency to "reinvent the wheel" each time an issue emerges.

Through conversations with numerous visitor center managers and interpretive specialists, a group of key issues in successful visitor center program management emerged along with a strategy for research. The strategy included a literature search, personal contacts with center managers, and site visits to a number of visitor centers. Of the research conducted, printed materials proved more useful than had been expected.

As work on the project progressed, it became clear that the Handbook should include a look at what interpretation is and the boundless potential our visitor centers have as interpretive centers. While some visitor centers simply provide information and orientation, their full potential lies in providing opportunities for visitor appreciation and committment through a quality interpretive services program. The following illustration shows the four key elements of a successful visitor center:



As the Handbook developed, the importance of "message" driven programs emerged. These messages, often called "themes" by interpreters, are complete statements rather than simple "topics". For example, rather than managing a center that is about "rivers", the center should develop the topic of "rivers" into a theme or message. The message might be that "rivers flow through our lives, bringing us abundant water, recreation, and inspiration." Centers based on themes rather than topics are most successful because once the central theme is established, all other concepts and ideas can be connected to it. This allows the formation of a message which becomes a meaningful whole rather than simply a lot of interesting but unconnected topics and ideas. The Handbook strongly promotes the importance of message driven centers.

The Handbook goes on to promote the importance of all the center's "voices". From the "dynamic front desk" and its sales items to its theater and telephone requests, a visitor center truely speaks its message with many voices. The Handbook urges that all these voices should speak loudly, clearly, and in harmony with all the others. Further, the center and all parts of its program should be universally accessible, allowing for physical access, sensory access, and message access for all who visit.

The Visitor Center Manager's Handbook advocates and recommends:

* quality training for all staff, including volunteers, to assure quality interpretive services.
* base budgets which are properly requested, clearly justified, and wisely spent, while numerous "budget stretching" strategies are explored and utilized.
* the use of a variety of visitor center management "tools" including operation and maintenance plans, blocked work schedules, and progam evaluation techniques which can be sharpened and used to help build the program.

Finally, the Handbook clarifies that managing a visitor center program with far reaching effects is a challenge which must be approached with creativity and a passion for excellence. With this type of management, visitor centers can contribute to a renaissance in interpretation which will promote new levels of appreciation, awareness, and respect for the precious heritage sites and spectacular natural landscapes of our National Forests.

Methodology

Recognizing the importance of several key issues in successful visitor center program management, I established a three part research strategy which allowed me to more clearly define these issues and to seek out various ways of addressing them. My strategy included a literature search, personal contacts with center managers, and site visits to a number of visitor centers.

Personal contacts began with colleagues in the interpretive field who have experience in various agencies and organizations across the country. Correspondence through the Forest Service Data General mailing list for Visitor Center Directors provided me with many new contacts as did the opportunity to network face to face with dozens of interpretive program managers and visitor center directors at the NAI National Workshop in Santa Clara, CA during November of 1992. These personal contacts led to literature recommendations, further personal contacts, and suggestions to visit various successful visitor centers.

Researching literature included use of the computerized FS INFO database, review of university library holdings, consultation with a distributor specializing in marketing interpretive publications, review of the R6Interp Information Center Service for Interpretive Services in the Pacific Northwest, and interaction with the National Association of Interpretation (NAI) to obtain published materials of NAI and it's two predecessor ogranizations, the Western Interpreters Association and the Association of Interpretive Naturalists.

A series of site visits were extremely valuable in allowing me to observe, first hand, visitor center and various interpretive programs that are excelling in various elements of program management.

Analysis of the above information led to the development of the Visitor Center Managers Handbook.

Literature Review, Personal Interviews, Research Assistance, & Site Visits

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Reponen, Gerald. Chilao Visitor Center. Angeles National Forest. La Canada, California: Budget strategies.
Richard, Ellis. Interpretive Specialist. Grand Canyon National Park. National Park Service. Accessibility and international visitors.
Rowe, Art. Pisgah Natinal Forest. Pisgah Forest, North Carolina: Overall content of paper.
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St. Michelle, Michael. Interpretive Specialist. Lake Tahoe Basin Visitor Center. Forest Service. Lake Tahoe, California: Volunteers, interpretive training, budget strategies, management tools.
Tanner, Karla. Interpretive Specialist. Mount Rainier National Park, Washington. Training and management tools.
Walker, Wendy. Instructor and Interpretive Consultant at Huxley College of Environmental Studies. Bellingham, WA.: Learning Styles, volunteers, interpretive training, budget strategies, thematic interpretive centers.
Zeller, Janet. Accessibility coordinator, U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Region 8: Accessibility.

Research Assistance

Carr, Deborah. Washington Office of U.S.D.A. Forest Service: Assistance with research for paper.
Cudnohfsky, Susan. FS INFO NW: Research Assistance in locating a number of obscure articles.
FS VC Directors Mailing List: Provided opportunity to network with other visitor center directors.
Kay, Tracy. Member of the Board of Directors, Association of Nature Center Administrators. Rye, New York: Assistance locating reference materials and back issues of the periodical "Directions".

R6INTERP Information Center Service: Provided quick access to many references on interpretation.

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Site Visits

Cradle of Forestry, Pisgah National Forest, Pisgah, NC

Fort Clatsop National Historic Site Visitor Center, Astoria, WA

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco, CA

Lawrence Hall of Science, Berkeley, CA

Monterey Bay Aquarium, Monterey, CA

Oconaluftee Visitor Center, Great Smokey Mountains National Park, Cherokee, NC

Oregon Coast Aquarium, Newport, OR

Paradise Visitor Center, Mount Rainier National Park, Ashford, WA

Visitor Centers Can Inspire!

Contents

Visitor Centers as Interpretive Centers

Interpretive Centers and Information Centers

Interpretive Centers are Launchpads!

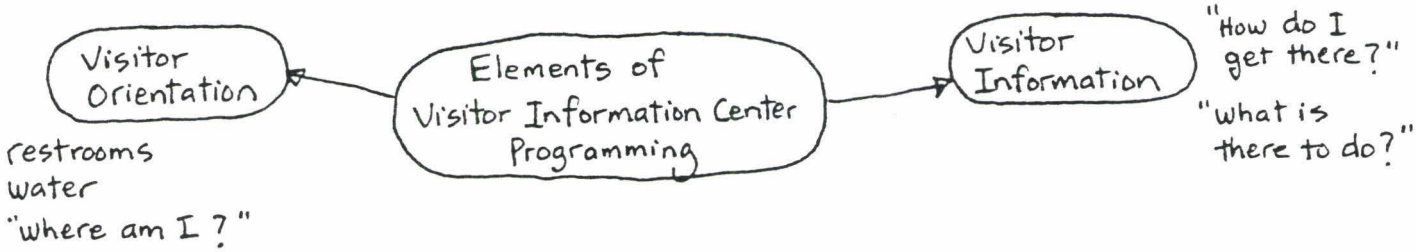
Goal: Interpretive Centers That Inspire!

References

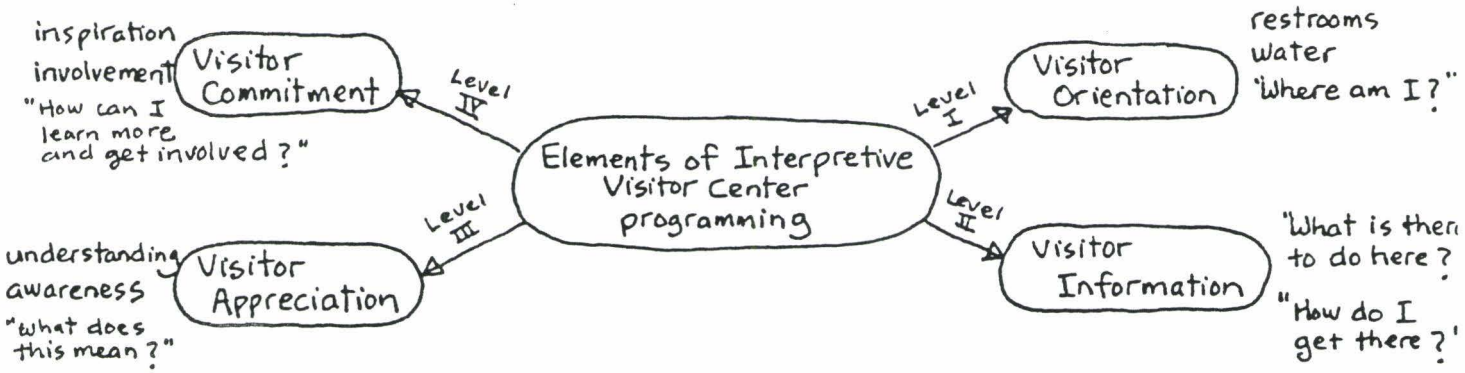
Visitor Centers Can Inspire I

Visitor Centers as Interpretive Centers:

Visitor centers have boundless potential! As central locations for travellers coming to experience a special area, Monument, or Park, visitor centers can meet visitor's vasic needs and provide enrichment and inspiration for those who stop to visit. Some visitor centers stop short of their full potential by providing only two levels of service: information and orientation.



Yet, when visitor centers expand to their full potential, they begin by providing 1) information about the area, and 2) orientation to the area but continue to provide visitors with the opportunities to 3) gain appreciation for the area and 4) to begin to develop a commitment to help care for it. These four elements are often referred to as the "four levels of interpretation". They also describe four major functions or program levels of a visitor center which inspires !



Interpretive Centers are Launchpads!

A visitor center can be a starting point for visitors coming to an area, a mid point in their visit, or a final stop before leaving. A center can provide basic orientation and learning opportunities for first time visitors but can also fill the more challenging needs of repeat visitors and individuals already knowledgeable about the area. In any case, it is a place in which visitors can "come into contact with the whole program" of the area and be pointed toward interpretive opportunities. Most importantly, visitor center staff can help set the tone for a visitor's experiences and "reveal with enthusiasm the meaning of the landscape.... right there telling its' own story." (Edwards, 1979)

Visitor centers are a part of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and should become the "launchpads" from which visitors disperse, choosing from the full spectrum of sought after experiences including recreation, enjoyment, fun, and learning. (See Appendix B for an overview of how visitor centers fit into the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum.)

Goal: Interpretive Centers That Inspire!

This Managers Handbook promotes all for levels of program management because, across the United States and around the world, there are so many important issues and concepts beyond basic orientation and information which visitors should be able to access if they choose. Richard Pawling (1991) says that "a mediocre interpteter tells, a good interpreter explains, a great interpreter demonstrates, while a superior interpreter inspires." The same analysis holds true for visitor centers as a whole. As center managers, we should build and manage our programs not only to tell and explain, but to demonstrate and provide the opportunity for visitors to be inspired to new thinking, big concepts, and commitment as well. This is our potential!

Recognizing the importance of interpretation in our visitor centers, we will next look more closely at what interpretation is.

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Creating Magical Atmospheres

Contents

Interpretation is a High Calling

Interpretation is "Informative Enjoyment"

Interpretation is Information Plus

Successful Interpretation is Thematic

Whole Concepts

Tum-Noon-Wit

Conclusion: Visitor Center's Based on Themes are Magical!

References

Creating Magical Atmospheres

For uncounted generations, long before we began to define the profession of interpretation, people sat together late in the evening, listening to storytellers interpret the origins of life, the facts of life, and many funny, scary or sad tales, all to the enrichment and delight of those gathered. (Cantu, 1990) Today, part of that tradition is carried out by thousands of interpreters each day as they present interpretive programs in Forests, Monuments, and Parks, and in zoos, museums, and nature centers around the world. Today's interpreters relate fascinating stories about their areas with visitors and are rewarded by the twinkle of new understanding which is often seen in the eyes of their audiences.

The Atmosphere in Which Wisdom Reveals Itself:

Naturalist and writer Barry Lopez refers to the Inuit dialect which has a word for "storyteller", translated to mean "a person who creates the atmosphere in which wisdom reveals itself." (Beck, 1989) Perhaps this is the true challenge for the interpreter and visitor center manager: to create those magical atmospheres where wisdom and understanding can be revealed.

Interpretation is a High Calling

Interpretation is a "high calling", says Lopez. It is a calling which evokes the best in each of us as interpreters: Our deepest love for the land, our sincerest commitment to live lightly and sustainably upon it, and our desire to effectively communicate our understanding of the planet's diverse beauty and wonder with others.

Interpretation is "Informative Enjoyment":

It is widely recognized that most interpretation takes place in a leisure setting. Dr. Sam Ham (1992) emphasises that communication with a non-captive audiences (those not "required" to be present) in leisure settings must be approached differently than communication with a captive audience (those required or expected to attend) in more formal settings. It's easy to see that while a school teacher or minister may expect the class or congregation to stay in their seats until a technical lecture or lengthy sermon is complete, visitors voluntarily attending a poor quality interpretive talk will often slip away at the first opportunity.

Yorke Edwards (1979) says visitors seek "informative enjoyment" and that we must make the telling of our stories "more attractive than anything else available". His thoughts go on to parallel Lopez when he says our aim is to help people "open up their senses to receive messages from the earth". We must work hard to create these enjoyable learning experiences within our visitor centers.

So how do we make the telling of our stories more interesting than anything else available to our visitors? This is the challenge and the art of interpretation.

Although it is not the purpose of this handbook to explore interpretive techniques, the following are suggested as some key elements which can help to create enjoyable, effective interpretive experiences:

*Successful interpretation, according to Sam Ham, is enjoyable, relevant, organized and thematic. (Ham, 1992)

* Freeman Tilden (1957) wrote that to be effective we need to "relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor".

* The Arizona Sonora Desert Museum promotes that effective interpreters present a "unified story, show enthusiasm, use humor, involve the audience by using questioning techniques, and relate to the audience's personal experience."

Interpretation is Information Plus!

Tilden (1957) wrote that "information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information." Corky McReynolds confirms this distinction between and the need for both information and interpretation when he quotes Madeline Hunter: "What is important is that students have information they understand and can apply before you expect them to successfully achieve more complex cognitive feats." (McReynolds, 1990)

According to Glen Kaye, "Information is describing, naming, identifying, listing, without insight, (and is) solely factual, while interpretation is analyzing, classifying, comparing, (and) contrasting. Interpretation is holistic. It cultivates values. It develops relationships. It relates to an individual's experience. It creates understanding. It motivates. It fosters appreciation. It uses "What if?" and "So what?" questions to forecast, predict, evaluate and speculate. It is a way to draw insight." (Kaye, 1991)

The graphic on the following page illustrates how exhibit or sign text for a heritage site can be written in a factual format or can be presented in an interpretive way, relating information to people's experiences and using questioning strategies or other interpretive techniques.

INTERPRETATION *v:* an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.

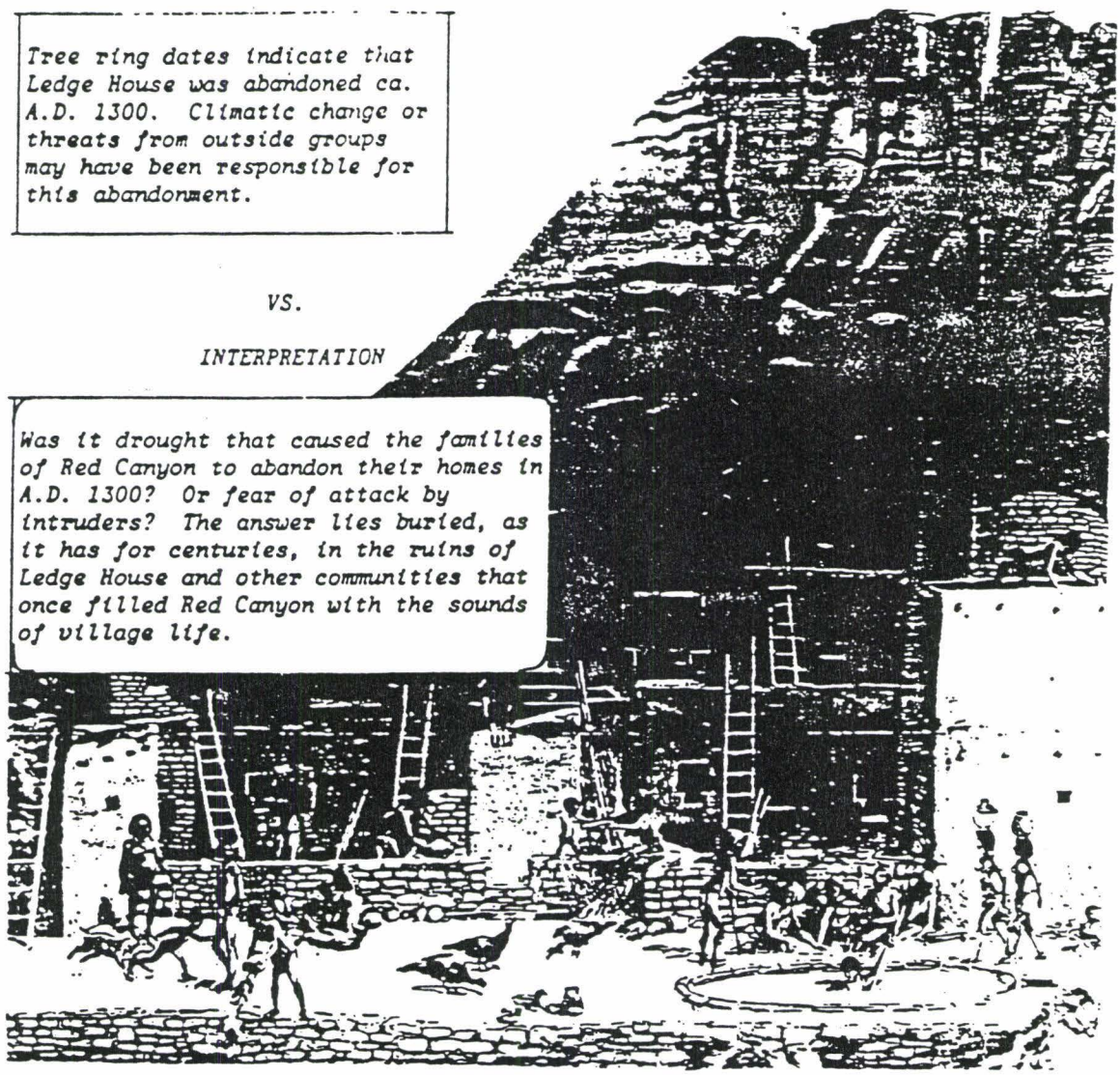
INFORMATION

Tree ring dates indicate that Ledge House was abandoned ca. A.D. 1300. Climatic change or threats from outside groups may have been responsible for this abandonment.

VS.

INTERPRETATION

Was it drought that caused the families of Red Canyon to abandon their homes in A.D. 1300? Or fear of attack by intruders? The answer lies buried, as it has for centuries, in the ruins of Ledge House and other communities that once filled Red Canyon with the sounds of village life.



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Successful Interpretation is Thematic:

Interpretive "themes" are often confused with "topics". But, in fact, they are two very different things. A topic is simply the subject area being interpreted, while the theme is a message or statement about the topic. For example, a topic might be: "Rivers". While a theme about rivers might be: "Rivers flow through our lives, bringing us abundant water, recreation, and inspiration". Without a clear message or theme, interpretive presentations can easily become a lot of interesting facts and stories that really don't make a point. By contrast, a talk, sign, or display can quickly become focused and meaningful when organized around a central theme.

Sam Ham (1992) states that themes should:

1) Be stated as short, simple, complete sentences.
2) Contain only one idea.
3) Reveal the overall purpose of the presentation.
4) Be specific.
5) Be interestingly worded (if possible using active verbs).

Themes are actually messages . Following are additional examples of topics and themes:

TOPICS	THEMES
Volcanos	Volcanos are continually shaping and reshaping the earth.
Trees	Trees: If you've seen one, you'll want to see them all!
National Forests	National Forests are diverse national treasures that we can enjoy but must not abuse.

Ham provides this simple 3 step process for writing a theme (1992):

1. Select your general topic (for example, "our soil") and use it to complete the following sentence:
   "Generally, my presentation (talk, exhibit, etc.) is about _____ *our soil* _____."
   (put your general topic here)

2. State your topic in more specific terms and complete the following sentence:
   "Specifically, I wnat to tell my audience about _____ *the importance of conserving our soil* _____."
   (put your specific topic here)

3. Now express your theme by completing the following sentence:
   "After hearing my presentation (or reading my exhibit, etc.), I want my audience to understand that _____ *it's necessary to conserve our soil in order to increase our crops and to protect the quality of our water* _____. (put your theme here)

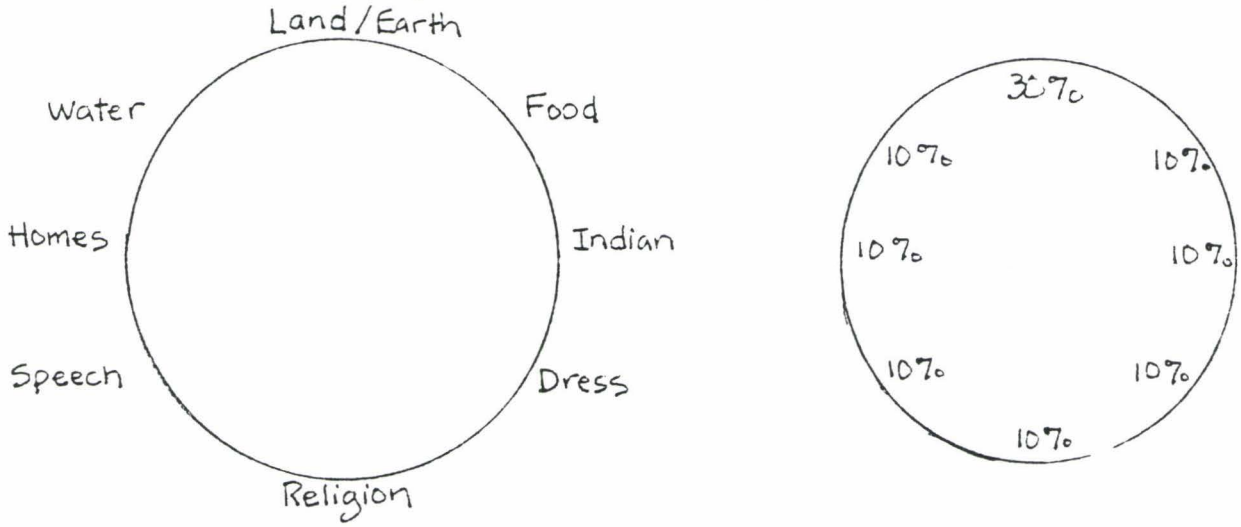
Well written themes help the visitor by giving them the central concept or idea to which they can connect all the supporting ideas, examples, and information. Themes also help us in developing interpretive talks and displays by helping us focus on what major ideas to include in the presentation.

Whole Concepts:

Of all Freeman Tilden's interpretive principles (see Appendix C), Amy Galperin (1992) suggests that interpreters need to improve the most on the principle that "interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part." Galperin's observation is a reminder that along with presenting needed facts and information, our themes should seek to relate to whole concepts.

Tum-Noon-Wit:

Louie Dick, an elder of the Umatilla Indian Nation in Oregon, teaches that we must always consider the wholeness and connectedness of life when we talk about issues. He has shared Tum-Noon-Wit, or "the Creator's Law", with many people in the pacific northwest. According to Tum-Noon-Wit, all things are connected and cannot be separated. Therefore, when we approach an issue or activity such as cutting some trees, for example, our discussions and concerns cannot be only for the trees. We must also consider how cutting the trees will affect the water, food, religion, etc. For this reason, 30% of the discussion may center on the trees, but 10% of the discussion must consider how this activity will affect the water, 10% must look at how our religion will be affected, etc.



The large circle, above-left, represents the connected whole of Tum-Noon-Wit. The smaller circle, above-right, can be placed inside the larger circle so that it turns within the larger circle. When we consider cutting trees, we turn the inner circle so that 30% points to Land/Earth (where the trees grow). In this way, we are reminded that while we may spend 30% of our discussion on cutting the trees, we must also allow 10% of our time to consider how cutting the trees will affect each of the other elements in the circle of Tum-Noon-Wit.

Looking at our visitor centers, how do our localized, site specific messages relate to the bigger stories and issues around us? How do they connect to our visitors? Do they relate to loss of welands or forest habitats? Do they connect to species extinction or management of important heritage sites? Do they tie into bigger issues of air, soil, or water quality?

As we manage our visitor centers and develop interpretive presentations, we should consider the circles of Tum-Noon-Wit as a way to ensure that we connect our messages to the bigger picture and to the wholeness of life.

Conclusion: Visitor Centers Based on Themes are Magical!

It is critical that visitor centers be based on a central theme. Centers based on themes rather than topics are most successful because their messages tie together into a meaningful whole, rather than simply being filled with many interesting but unconnected topics and ideas. Visitor center managers should carefully examine their center's purpose and determine whether the central message is coming through for visitors or if visitors are departing with scattered, easily forgotten facts. While it is true that some visitors may only be interested in and ready for a few facts or basic orientation, those who are ready for and open to broader connections and meanings should find themselves in an atmosphere where new understanding can be revealed. It can be magical !

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Visitor Centers Speak With Many Voices

Contents

Visitor Center Structures

Exterior Displays, Trails, and Viewpoints

"Dynamic" Information Desk

Sales Materials and Free Literature

Roving Interpretation

Scheduled Interpretive Presentations

Exhibits and Theaters

Introducing Theater Programs

Telephones and Correspondence

After Hours Information

Meeting Rooms

Environmental Education

Visitor Centers as a Community Resource

Other Voices

Conclusion: All Voices Clear and Harmonious

References

Visitor Centers Speak With Many Voices

Having looked at the challenge and potential for visitor center programs, we should begin to look at how to make the potential a reality.

Often visitor centers are thought of as structures housing exhibits, theaters, and information desks. Yet, while these frequently are key elements of visitor center program design, we need to manage our visitor center programs to effectively communicate in many ways, with "many voices".

Visitor Center Structures:

In many cases, the design of the visitor center structure itself can and should interpret part of the theme of the area. For example, the Glacier Public Service Center, a small visitor center on the Mount Baker -Snoqualmie National Forest, is a Civilian Conservation Corps built structure which, itself, tells part of the area's history, Inside, exhibits and interpretive staff relate the broader stories of the surrounding area. Some newer centers, such as the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center, are designed to include elements of traditional regional architecture and, thereby, become a link to the area's cultural history. In cases like these, the visitor center structure can be a valuable visual aid in interpreting your area.

If your center's design relates well to your center's message, be sure to tie its story into your exhibits, presentations, and discussions. Some visitors may not relate as well to any other part of your program as they do to the linkages between your structure and your overall story.

Exterior Dispalys, Trails, and Views:

Many visitors prefer staying outdoors rather than coming into what may be a busy or noisy visitor center. For these people, interpretive signs or exterior displays may be of most interest, along with short trails, viewpoints, and "self discovery". Sheltered seating, water fountains, information boards and kiosks are important elements in promoting visitor enjoyment of these settngs. Remember to provide links between the inside voices and outside voices in your interpretive program.

The "Dynamic" Information Desk:

"Front desk" areas are critically important in our centers, often providing the initial or only contact and information exchange between visitors and staff. Front desks can either be warm, inviting, effective contact areas for guests or they can be cold and disappointing. We need to work hard to make front desk areas "dynamic"! Here are some ways to help promote successful front desks:

* Keep the desk, table, counter or podium from becoming a "barrier" between you and your visitors. Turn it, move it out from the wall, or change it's shape, but find a way for visitors to feel in touch with staff at that station. If nothing else, encourage staff to "come out from behind the desk" and develop a more personal contact. The point is to develop an easy, friendly rapport between staff and guest, and desks shouldn't get in the way.

* Be sure desks are accessible both for visitors and staff. At least a part of the surface of the desk should be no more than 34" from the floor, with a minimum of 27" clearance underneath. Consult the Design Guide For Accessible Outdoor Recreation (1990) for illustrations and further details.

* Staff members working at the front desk should always be "heads up" and ready to greet visitors in a friendly way: A smile, a nod of recognition or a friendly "good morning" are all positive ways to make visitors feel welcome.

* Many visitors like to sign their name and leave a compliment or comment. For these visitors, a Guest Register at or near the front desk is valuable. Instead of a simple "Remarks" column in your register, consider including a "Question of the Day" such as "What was your favorite display?" or "What new concept did you learn during your visit to the Center?" Answers to these kinds of questions can help you determine which parts of your center are most effective and whether your key messages are getting across.

* A bouquet of fresh flowers, a vase of dried flowers, or a seasonal arrangement such as a Christmas wreath can add a warm welcome and personal touch to a front desk. Be sure, however, to attach a label indicating that the arrangements were grown "in the garden of_____ ____". You don't want visitors to get a subliminal message that they can go outside and pick flowers for themselves!

* Sam Ham (1992) recommends keeping a bundle of blank post cards handy at the front desk. When a question arises for which you can't locate the answer right away, take down the visitors name and address on one side and write their question on the other. When you find the answer, write it ona card and mail the card to the person who asked the question.

* Promote active listening skills with anyone who works with visitors. Always be sure you know exactly what a visitor is asking before you answer.

* As visitors plan the next stops on their trip, point out interpretive sites they might enjoy. Give them a schedule of interpretive activities which they may wish to attend. Ask stimulating questions about what they'vealready seen or about what they are going to be seeing! "Did you notice?" "When you get to _____, see if you can tell why _____ _____." Etc.

* The following "Count-Down Sheet" was developed by Albert Mauncy (1968) as a reminder of the key elements of attitude, personality, and operations:

From: "Say, Ranger...Or, How to Perform in the Information Center".
by Albert Mauncey

THE COUNT-DOWN SHEET

(All items must be checked before beginning operation.)

I. Attitude

I am ☐ convinced of the importance of the job.
☐ aware of the importance of first impressions.
☐ aware of the appearance of my surroundings.
☐ looking for ways to keep my job interesting to both visitor and me.

II. Personality

(Reminder: I may be the only National Park Service representative the visitor will see during his stay in the park.)

I will be

☐ available.
☐ courteous.
☐ enthusiastic.
☐ helpful.
☐ informed.
☐ MYSELF.
☐ neat.
☐ patient.
☐ uniformed sharply.
☐ well groomed.

III. Operations

A. Greeting visitors

I am ready to ☐ smile and speak.
☐ be gracious and friendly—AND MEAN IT!
☐ stand when visitor enters and while he is at my station.

B. Answering questions

I am prepared to ☐ speak plainly.
☐ use a pleasant but forceful voice.
☐ use "show them" folders, maps and books.
☐ and turn them so visitors can read.
☐ add useful information—when it *is* useful.

C. Ammunition

I will ☐ obtain road and weather information early in the day and keep it current.
☐ have informational literature at hand and keep it neat.
☐ keep sales publications available, neatly displayed, and priced.
☐ know sales techniques and policies.
☐ see to it that information room and its furnishings are clean and in their places.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1968 O—290-496

Sales Materials and Free Literature:

Most visitors will only spend a limited amount of time on site, so the best of exhibits and programming may only get a casual look. With this in mind, the interpretive value of sales items and free literature greatly increases. While visitor interest in you area's story is high, they often look for literature they can take with them to read later.

Carefully choose not only the items you sell, but also the free literature you pass out. Not only will these items continue to interpret the area after visitors have gone on their way, books, photos, videos, brochures, and other items become interpretive tools for visitors to use in sharing their experiences with others.

Following are criteria developed at Mount St. Helens for selecting sales items. They could be used as a model in developing crfiteria for other interpretive areas.

Interpretive Association Sales Item Selection Criteria
Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument

In order to facilitate and clarify the sales item approval process for interpretive associations with the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument, the following criteria have been developed.

Mandatory Criteria

In order to receive consideration as a sales item, the product MUST meet all of the mandatory criteria:

1. The item interprets one of the overall theme(s) of the Monument. This interpretation is balanced and factual, not sensationalized.

2. None of the materials used to produce this item have been collected within the Legislated Monument or other areas where such collection is prohibited.

3. None of the materials used to produce this item have come from any threatened, endangered, or illegal plant or animal species.

4. The item conveys cultural sensitivity and is respectful of diverse racial, ethnic, and gender backgrounds. The item also displays sensitivity to those families who lost members or friends as a result of the May 18th eruption and aftermath.

Additional Criteria

Once the proposed sales item has met the mandatory criteria, it will be evaluated on the following to determine whether it is appropriate for a center or site. While an individual item might not meet all of these criteria, the more of them it meets, the more likely it is to be approved.

1. Has this item been identified previously as a need, either in an interpretive or sales area operating plan? How well does it meet the interpretive needs of this specific center or site?

2. Does the item provide for customer service at the center or site? Has it been requested? Has the public expressed interest in this subject? Is it in a format or media the customer prefers? Does it meet visitor convenience or safety needs?

3. If this is a "gift item" such as a pin, patch, shirt, mug, etc., how well does it interpret the themes of the site?

4. Is this item attractive, tasteful, and of high quality? Does it reflect well on the agency? Is it well-constructed? Are scenes and colors accurately depicted? Will it continue to function with sustained use? Is it priced appropriately?

5. Is the Monument name spelled correctly?

6. Is this item packaged in a way that reduces or recycles waste?

7. Is a similar item already being carried at the site or by another business in the area? Is it appropriate to dulpicate? Will this item be sold in addition to the other item or will it replace it?

8. Does this item help provide variety in the inventory? Does it provide old information in a new format more attractive to a new customer group? How does this item fit in with other items in terms of pricing and quality?

9. Is there room in the sales area to display this item? Does it make the sales area more inviting? Will this item create a storage problem?

10. Will this item generate a positive profit margin? Is it likely to be a good seller? If not, does it fulfill an important need for the center or site? Can you afford to carry this item based on the branch budget?

11. Considering all of the above, is this item a good investment?

Notes

* Some basic items may be approved even if they are not interpretive or educational IF they provide for visitor safety or convenience while in the Monument. Such items might include rain gear, sunscreen, chap stick, camera film, etc.

* The approval committee may indicate that some sales items must be tagged or bagged with an interpretive card as a condition of approval.

* The approval of a sales item can be revisited if a better or more appropriate item becomes available. In such circumstances, approval for the old item will continue until all current stock has been depleted.

* No items that promote the consumption of alcoholic beverages, such as shot glasses or decanters, will be approved.

Roving Contacts and Roving Interpretation:

Roving contacts, when staff members move freely through the center or outside, provide some of the best and most natural opportunities for meeting visitors and interpreting the area. Bill Lewis (1980) sees roving as the ideal time to present "mini" interpretive talks and "mini" walks. Impromptu discussions with visitors about their immediate questions become "teachable moments" which can be very meaningful.

Roving is not just aimless wandering. Rather, it can be spontaneous but with clear objectives such as:

* to rove in crowded areas and help disperse use.
* to rove in sensitive outdoor locations and share important resource protection messages.
* to rove in areas where distant birds or easily overlooked natural activities can be pointed out and interpreted.

Within the center, exhibits and photos can become "props" which roving interpreters can use for illustrating important messages. Roving also provides opportunities to observe safety hazards, to pick up litter, to listen to what visitors are thinking, and to simply bring a personal touch to the center's program. Staff members should not only be encouraged to rove but scheduled at various times. (See "Blocked Daily Work Schedules" in section titled **Visitor Center Management Tools.**)

Roving staff provide linkage between various parts of the center's program as they answer questions, clarify schedules, and maintain a personal connection with the visitor. Roving also injects movement, variety, and fresh air into staff schedules while providing a "big view" of how the center program is functioning.

Scheduled Interpretive Presentations:

Slide illustrated talks, talks around special exhibits or relief maps, living history presentations, and guided walks through the Center can become very successful interpretive programs within a visitor center. Although staffing limitations and center crowding may sometimes limit the number of potential interpretive programs, visitor center managers should seek creative ways to include scheduled presentations when visitor flow and staffing do allow.

Excellent resources on presenting effective interpretive presentations are included in Sam Ham's book Environmental Interpretation (1992) and The Interpreters Guidebook--Techniques for Programs and Presentations (1992) by Regnier, Gross, and Zimmerman.

Exhibits and Theaters:

Accessible, thematic displays and theaters are extremely important elements of many visitor centers. (See Guide sections titled **Universal Program Accessibility** and **Interpretation--A High Calling** for further discussions on these topics.) Yet once displays and theater presentations are in place in a center, the visitor center manager takes on the new responsibility of seeing to it that exhibits and theater programs are maintained and kept up to date.

There are few things more irritating for visitors than exhibits that are dirty, broken or inaccurate. With this in mind, an Exhibit/Theater Update and Repair file should be established for use as a reference when developing budget requests and work plans. Notes and visitor comments on misspelled words, innacurate information, broken or faded components and other problems can be kept in this file. Managers must also be sure that routine cleaning and repairs are scheduled and completed. (See Handbook section titled **Visitor Center Management Tools** -- "Operations & Maintenance" for examples of budgeting and scheduling maintenance work.)

Funding for improving accessibility can be promoted through regular budget planning as well as through special partnerships. Review this handbook's chapter on **Budget Stretching Strategies** for ideas on how to make your accessibility upgrades a reality.

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Parratt, Smitty. 1992. "Snappy Props to Clarify and Energize Interpretive Presentations". pp 287-290. Proceedings, NAI National Interpreter's Workshop. National Association for Interpretation. Fort Collins, Colorado.

Other References Cited:

Zeller, Janet. 1992. Personal conversations at Clemson University.

Recommended Books and Reference Materials:

Costello, John, et al. 1990. Design Guide for Accessible Outdoor Recreation. USDA Forest Service, Technology & Development Center. San Dimas, California. (Copies available by contacting:
Accessibility Coordinator, Recreation Staff
USDA Forest Service
201 14th St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20250)

Edelstein, Daniel. 1990. A Program Planner For Naturalists & Outdoor Educators. Joy of Nature Press. San Rafael, California.

Introducing Theater Programs:

Introducing theater programs is an excellent way to establish contact with visitors. This is a perfect time to introduce the center's theme and to invite questions and discussion at the conclusion of the program. Introductions always add a warm, personal touch.

Telephones and Correspondence:

Telephones and mail put us in touch with many "absentee visitors" who may never actually come to visit our centers. Yet these people deserve the same quality service as those who personally visit. Staff members responsible for phones and mail should be provided with complete area orientation and communication skills training in order to quickly and professionally respond to information requests. Skills in careful listening and accurate notetaking should not be assumed. Some basic tips on telephone etiquette include:

* Give a friendly, simple greeting.
* Be an active listner.
* Speak up and speak clearly.
* Use a friendly tone of voice.
* Keep complete reference materials handy.
  (See "Reference Notebook" in **Visitor Center Management Tools** section.)

Correspondence will sometimes require a specific, personal response on a complex issue. These letters should be signed or approved by the center director. However, many basic requests for information can be answered by visitor center staff. A friendly, "Thanks for writing to us" form letter can save staff a lot of time and still be personalized with a written note and ink signature at the bottom. The example on the following page is simple, friendly, and personalized.

Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument

☐ Headquarters
Route 1, Box 369
Amboy, WA 98601
(206) 247-5473

☐ Visitor Center
3029 Spirit Lake Highway
Castle Rock, WA 98611
(206) 274-6644

April 5, 1993

Dear Mr. Nickila,

Thank you for contacting us about Mount St. Helens.

Here's the information you asked for. I hope it will be helpful in planning your visit or learning more about this special place.

If we can help you further, please call or write to either of the addresses above.

Have a safe and pleasant trip.

Best wishes,

Jim Dwiring

P.S.
Good luck with your project!

Gifford Pinchot National Forest
USDA • Forest Service

For callers and writers who must be referred to other sources, complete, up to date reference information should be readily available. Many centers develop a Reference Notebook containing maps, lists of motels, campgrounds, phone numbers to call "for more info", etc. (See Handbook section on **Visitor Center Tools**-- "Reference Notebook" for suggested content.)

To make our written and telephone correspondence accessible, information should be available in alternative ways:

* Verbal/auditory information should be available in written form.
* Visual/graphic information should be available in audio form and in large print.
* A TTY telephone (Typewriter Telephone) should be included in all staffed offices and/or interpretive sites. For further information on accessibility issues see Handbook section titled **Universal Accessibility**.

<u>After Hours Information:</u>

Some visitors travel early in the morning or late in the evening and may stop in or try to call when the center is closed. To provide these individuals with the information they need, consider the following:

* Provide an outdoor kiosk, information board or "sandwich" type board which displays basic information about the area. Free, photo copied maps can also be provided at these locations.
* Offer a 24 hour telephone recording with a brief message containing answers to the most commonly asked questions.
* Install a radio transmitter on the major travel route through your area which can broadcast area information 24 hours a day.
* Provide basic literature about your program to motels, restaurants, and campgrounds in your area where the information can be handed out at all hours of the day.
* Seek opportunities to publish basic information in travel magazines and local papers.
*
*

Meeting Rooms:

A meeting room or conference room in a visitor center is a valuable resource. It can serve multiple functions for many people. Use of a visitor center meeting space should first be focused on achieving the primary goals of the center's program. This may include using the room for:

* interpretive programs for visitors.
* environmental education activities for school groups.
* gathering and program space for tour groups.
* staff meetings.
* other, related agency meetings.

But when not needed for these purposes, the room can be made available to other groups, including other agencies or community groups.

Making meeting room space available during low use times, for uses other than immediate visitor center program needs, can strengthen support for our programs within the Forest Serveice as well as with partners in our communities and geographic areas. Use of the room may be especially important to community groups if there is limited meeting space available elsewhere in the area When offering meeting space for uses not directly related to your program, be sure to have a written policy statement defining which weeks or months during the year the space is available along with guidelines and etiquette for room use. An accurate scheduling calendar and reservation notebook are also essential to guarantee that the room is not double booked. The reservation notebook should identify which organization or agency has reserved the room for which hours on which day. It should also indicate the purpose of the meeting, list a contact person for the group, and list a phone number where that person can be reached. If concerns about certain types of groups using the space arise, those concerns should be handled in the policy statement for use of the room.

Environmental Education:

Many visitor centers are located within or close enough to communities that they can provide environmental education programs for schools and other organized groups. For this reason, it is important for visitor centers to develop environmental education materials for use by teachers and group leaders. These materials should include pre visit, on site, and post visit activities, as well as providing key reading and references for further research. In addition to on site programs, consider outreach possibilities where interpretive staff may take programs to schools and community gatherings.

Visitor Centers as a Community Resource:

Although visitor centers, by their very name, suggest that they exist for people visiting the area, in reality, they also have a special value for people who live nearby. Except when centers are located in very remote areas, they can become sources of community pride, employment opportunities, environmental learning centers, and gathering places for community groups. Visitor center managers have an important responsibility to be sure that a center meets the needs of both travelling visitors and local residents.

Center managers have a special opportunity to cultivate good relations between the Forest Service and local communities. When good relations exist, the community benefits by increased appreciation for the area and pride in the center. The Forest Service benefits from supportive press, increased local visitation, and potential local volunteers. And out of town visitors benefit from the quality program that results from the positive community energy that helps to power the center.

Following are some suggestions that can promote your visitor center as valued community resource:

* Schedule annual open houses especially for local residents. Hold them in the evening or at a time that the community can most easily arrange to come. Have free refreshments and something special for the kids. Include a special speaker or the screening of a special film.

* Schedule an art exhibit during the quieter time of the year which features local artists, then publicize it well in the local papers and on local bulletin boards.

* Include exhibits such as area topographic models which allow local visitors to do the interpreting for family and friends.

* Display pertinent news clippings from local papers.

* Involve local residents in center changes and upgrades.

* When a controversial issue arrises in the area, be pro-active and offer the center as a neutral location to meet and discuss the issue.

* When National Forest planning seeks public involvement, set up an exhibit describing the issues, concerns and opportunities. Provide comment sheets and have staff members informed to answer questions and refer complex questions to specialists.

* Coordinate with local media to cover occasional special stories coming out of the center.

* Offer special programs for local schools, either in the center or in the classroom.

Other Voices:

Visitor centers speak with many other voices as well. Some of these include:

* amphitheaters
* auto tours
* discovery guides
* center sponsored seminars
* interpretive newspapers
* special events
* etc.

Conclusion: All voices Clear and Harmonious

From exhibits to sales items and from a "dynamic desk" to telephone requests, visitor centers do speak with many voices. As we manage our centers and design new ones, we need to remember to plan our programs so that all the available voices can speak as clearly and effectively as possible, rather than focusing primarily on only one or two voices. A visitor center manager's goal should be to assure that, in fact, the voices are all heard and that they all work in harmony with the others.

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Universal Accessiblity

Contents

The Average Person is a Myth !

Three Levels of Access:

- Physical Access
- Program Access
- "Message" Access

Physical or Architectural Access

Program or Sensory Access

Making Our Messages Accessible

- Learning Modalities
- Left Brain/Right Brain
- Learning Styles

Brainstorm List for Universal Accessibility

Recommendations for Universal Accessibility

References

Recommended Books and References

Universal Accessibility

The "Average Person" is a Myth:

Having identified center themes and discussed strengthening all the center's voices, the visitor center manager's next goal is to provide "universal access" to the center. To clarify what this means, it is important to distinguish between "traditional design" goals and "universal design" goals.

""Traditional design" utilizes building criteria, such as width of doors and height of counters, designed to meet the needs of the "average person." The "universal design" approach to site and facility planning and development considers all--not just average--user charactersitics. Some people are over 6 ft tall; others are under 4 ft. Some travel on foot, others use wheelchairs. Some have good sight, others need a guide. Some can hear, others need an interpreter. Some have full vigor and physical ability, others are limited by paralysis or a broken leg. Some have full use of their faculties, others have limitations. Universal design means consideration of all degrees of sensory awareness, all types of locomotion, and all levels of physical and intellectual function when choosing a site, planning a building, and scheduling a program. The "average person" is a myth. Thus, the concept of universal design should be followed when planning a site or facility. Universal design is based on providing facilities that are usable by the widest possible section of the public." (Design Guide For Accessible Outdoor Recreation, 1990)

Three Levels of Accessibility:

Most often when we discuss "accessibility" we think of **physical access** to a structure. Are the doors wide enough to accomodate wheel chairs? Is there ramped access to enter the structure? Are telephones and water fountains mounted at the right level to be reached by young people and persons in wheel chairs? Since passage of the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 these kinds of physical access have been required by law in any facility constructed in whole or in part by federal funds.

The second aspect of accessibility we generally discuss is that of **program access**. Can visitors with partial hearing loss hear our our theater sound track? Are our exhibits designed with large enough type and sufficient dark/light contrast for visitors with sight disabilities to read them? These kinds of access to programs for persons with visual, hearing, and learning disabilities have been required since passage of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, ammended in 1978.

Both these aspects of physical and program accessibility are critically important for visitor center managers to be familiar with because we want our interpretive facilities and messages to be available to all visitors. But there is a third aspect of accessibility with which we should also be familiar as we develop exhibits, talks, literature, and theater programs. This is the aspect of **message access**. For what good is it to make our structures physically accessible and then to utilize such things as open captions and audio description if our actual message doesn't "connect" with the visitor because it is presented in a way that they have difficulty understanding or relating to? Although not mandated by any law, the issue of message access or "learning style access" should be carefully examined.

Whether planning new facilities or upgrading existing ones we should think carefully about all these levels of access along with the needs of children international travellers, and all visitors. In so doing we will make our visitor centers, our programs, and our messages "universally accessible".

Architectural or Physical Accessibility:

As described above, the first level of accessibility is physical access to our facilities. Can visitors get into the center, the bathroom, the theater, etc.? We must provide for parking, access routes to facilities, and building entryways that can be negotiated by persons with physical disabilities. We must also provide accessible restrooms, water fountains, etc. Much has already been written on this aspect of accessibility and will not be repeated here. The Design Guide For Accessible Outdoor Recreation (1990), highlights the basic requirements for these aspects of physical access. Other excellent references are also being developed to guide the development of accessible facilities. Check with your regional accessibility coordinator for titles and information.

Program or Sensory Accessibility:

Once visitors have entered our visitor centers we must ensure that our exhibits, audio visual programs, and other information systems are accessible to visitors with visual, hearing, and learning disabilities. Can our visitors hear what we're saying? Can they see what we're showing? Can they touch, smell, taste, or in some way receive what we are attempting to communicate to them? Again, much has been written on providing program access. The Design Guide for Accessible Outdoor Recreation(1990) provides guidelines for assuring that our programs are universally accessible.

Making Our Messages Accessible:

Perhaps the biggest responsibility we have as visitor center staff and interpreters is to be good communicators. We spend considerable time learning about our areas and developing good writing, listening, and speaking skills. Yet one area we should pay more attention to is how the various learning style preferences of people can affect our ability to communicate with them. Simply put, we each have preferences in the ways we like to learn. Some people love to learn by active involvement and role playing, while others much prefer to stand back, watching and thinking. If a quiet, reflective person steps up to join in on an interpretive talk that is becoming very animated, with lots of audience interaction, the reflective person may well walk away from the program. Fortunately, this type of alienation need not occur. There are ways to involve all types of learners without having to loose anyone. To understand learning syle preferences, we should also consider learning modalities and left brain/right brain differences. In so doing we can learn to speak the language of all people.

Learning Modalities:

Researchers studying the human brain and how people learn have observed that there are various learning modalities or "ways in which brain-mind systems are best stimulated" (Christensen, 1990) The most commonly recognized modalities include:

* visual modality: People in this group are visually oriented, preferring to express themselves and take in information through the arts, graphics and simply "seeing".
* auditory modality: Individuals in this group interrelate best through sounds, music, and speech.
* kinesthetic modality: Gesturing and physical action helps people in this group express themselves and learn.
* symbolic/abstract modality: people in this group are most stimulated by reading, writing, math and symbolism.

Left Brain/Right Brain:

In addition to our recognition of learning modalities, neurological researchers decades ago learned that the left and right sides of the brain possess specialized abilities.The left hemisphere prefers to process information in a logical, sequential manner and houses the skills of speaking, reading, and writing. By contrast, the right hemisphere usually controls visual, creative, and emotional thought. Drawing and inventive skills are outlets for the right side of the brain. (Edelstein, 1992)

Although we occasionally refer to someone as a "really right brain" or "really left brain" person, in reality, while the person may have a tendency to be more left or right brain oriented, the two hemispheres work together. Successfuly integrating the special abilities of both sides of the brain results in "whole brain" thinking.

Left brain/right brain preferences along with preferred learning modalities affect our learning styles.

Learning Styles:

Daniel Edelstein (1992) recommends the 4Mat Learning Styles Model developed by Bernice McCarthy as an excellent system for understanding some of the differences in peoples' preferred learning styles. Edelstein says "current understanding suggests that interpreters should present programs which address the various learning style preferences of their visitors. Only then can the interpreter be assured that all of the audience participants can benefit from the presentation." (Edelstein, 1992)

According to the 4Mat system (McCarthy, 1980), four different learning style preferences can be identified among people. They include:

* **Style 1 Learners**: These are reflective, innovative thinkers who like to observe. Their favorite questins are "why?" and "Why not?"

* **Style 2 Learners**: Learners in this group tend to be analytical. They ask "What?" They work well with facts and typicaly do well in school.

* **Style 3 Learners:** In this group, learners are very practical. They like to experiment with hands on activities. They prefer to "do" rather than "discuss". They like to ask "How does it work?"

***Style 4 Learners**: These learners are often called "dynamic". They love to experiment and use intuition to solve problems. Their favorite question is "What if?"

McCarthy believes that individuals can learn from all four styles but will prefer one over the others. With this in mind, Christensen encourages interpreters to learn to "speak the language of all visitors" by becoming familiar with their learning style preferences. In doing so, we truely can become excellent communicators and interpreters.

It is widely believed that virtually every group of visitors you meet will include all four types of learners. For this reason Christensen recommends the following ways to connect with the various learning modalities, left brain/right brain preferences, and learning style groups: "Look to nature. In the natural world, diversity is the key to a healthy ecosystem. Since the audience has a diversity of learning and thinking types, then diversity in programming techniques can be your key to a successful interpretive presentation. Plan diversity into your programs even when it may not be possible to provide for the needs of all learning and thinking types. Try to reach as many as possible whenever possible."

The "Brainstorm List" which follows is a starting point for generating ideas on how to put diversity in our programs. It includes ideas on making our facilities, programs, and messages accessible to everyone. After reading through this list, add at least 10 more ideas of your own. Get together with several other members of your work group and see what other ideas you can come up with that can make your visitor center more accessible.

Brainstorm List
For Universal Accessibility

Overall Accessibility Issues:

** When considering overall physical and program access issues for your center and site, consult both the Design Guide for Accessible Outdoor Recreation and your Regional Accessibility coordinator. Together they can guide you to the needed reference materials, consultants, and suppliers. Your regional accessibility coordinator can also assist with developing a strategy for accoplishing your accessibility goals.
** Throughout your center, provide adequate lighting and seek to avoid glare.
** Keep display areas and sales areas uncluttered to allow easier movement for all visitors.
** Hire a diverse staff. This can strengthen your work group and aid in communicating with a diversity of visitors.

Access for hearing disabilities:

** In theater programs, provide open captions. Also, plan for assistive listening devices.
** Provide written texts of theater programs which can be available upon request.
** Have a sign language interpreter available on 24 hr notice.
** Be sure to welcome assist dogs into your center, but be careful not to distract them.

Access for sight disabilities:

** Sell "books on tape" in your sales areas.
** In theater programs, produce audio description sound tracks.
** Include multi sensory elements in displays.
** Consider how close bifocal users can get to exhibits. Glass cases and other barriers may prevent users of bifocals from getting close enough to read the text.
** Produce an audio tape tour of your center with walkman type tape players available on loan.
** Provide large print versions of your most popular publications (usually 18 pt. lettering) with distinct dark/light contrast.
** Provide braille text along with raised lettering.
** Provide TTY (Teletypewriter). These text telephones are valuable for staff and visitors.

Access for various learning styles:

** When developing or updating exhibits, John Hanna recommends including tactile, sensory, graphic, and audio components along with interactive and action elements so that all visitors can "learn in the way they learn best."
** For interpretive talks, consider Daniel Edelstein's suggestions in A Program Planner For Naturalists and Outdoor Educators. (1990).
** Smitty Parratt (1992) advocates multi sensory demonstrations with direct audience involvement as a successful way to interpret events, processes and relationships.
** The Pacific Science Center, in Seattle, Washington, has developed a travelling display titled: "Whales--Giants of the Deep". The exhibit incorporates a variety of media prescriptions which relate well to people with various learning styles. These include:
    -- three dimensional models.
    -- a guide which the visitor rubber stamps at various key exhibits.
    -- a scale you can stand on to compare human weights with whale weights.
    -- historic displays on whaling.
    -- a video program about whales.
    -- a computer game.

-- recordings of whale songs.
-- a ballot box in which to vote in support of a ban on whaling.

As it nurtures appreciation for whales, the exhibit becomes a good model for involving the various learning modalities and learning style preferences of visitors.

** Encourage staff to be aware of their own learning style preferences in order to imporve communication between each other.

Access for International Visitors:

** Seek to hire staff who are bilingual or multilingual.
** Print safety, orientation, resource protection, and basic interpretive messages in the languages most frequently spoken by your international visitors. Golden Gate NRA and Grand Canyon National Park have been successful with this approach.
** Be sure to use international symbols on maps and literature.
** On displays, print titles to key exhibits in more than one language and tell the story as much as possible through graphics and photos.

Access for Developmental Disabilities:

** Consider using the "3-30-3 Rule" (Zeller, 1992) in development of exhibits:

"3" Provide thematic title (and subtitle) which introduces the exhibit's theme. This should take about 3 seconds for most visitors to read.

"30" Present the key concepts supporting the theme through graphics, illustrations, and text. This might take most visitors about 30 seconds to read.

"3" Provide more detailed information (which might be in the form of photo captions or other more detailed descriptions) elaborating further on the theme, requiring most interested visitors about 3 minutes to read.

The "3-30-3" concept takes into account that the developmentally disabled may take up to 3 minutes to understand what it takes most visitors only seconds to grasp. The concept works well overall for visitors, too, by providing different levels of involvement for visitors with different interest levels.

Access for children:

** Be sure to carry a good selection of children's books in the sales area. Look at activity books on your area's themes. The Wilderness Will Books, available through Haggis House Publications (PO Box 26905 Salt Lake City, UT) are a good example of activity books that relate well to children.
** Joseph Cornell has written several books on nature education. He recommends that to make our messages connect with children we should share more, listen carefully to them, focus their attention right away, allow them to look and experience first, and cultivate a sense of joy. (Cornell, 1992)
** Include activity areas or touch and feel displays in your center. The words of Confucius provide a good rule: "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand."
** Schedule "family" programs.

Other Access Possibilities:

** Consider developing a simple "guide" to your visitor center. It could be one page, photo copied, which calls attention to the key messages of the center as represented by the most accessible exhibits and other "voices" of the center. It could ask questions, recommend hands on activities, and promote discussion between group members. It could conclude firmly on the center's overall theme, be printed in large print and in other languages. You might encourage or request a donation for it. It could be fun!

Recommendations for Universal Accessibility:

Everyone associated with visitor center management should become familiar with the three major areas of accessibility. The "Interpretive Progrm Accessibility Checklist", included in the **Visitor Center Management Tools** section of this handbook is a good tool for initial evaluation of a center and its interpretive program. Aspects of the center and its programs which are not accessible should be targeted for upgrading and improvement. This chapter's "Brainstorm List for Universal Accessibility" provides some ideas for improving access. References cited in this chapter provides further information and suggestions.

Training for Excellence in Interpretation

Contents

Career-long Interpretive Training

Seasonal Training

Interpretive Training at Mount St. Helens

- Spring Training
- Summer Field Seminars
- Staff Exchanges
- Winter Seminars

Brainstorm List for Interpretive Training

Training Recommendations

Recommended Books

Trianing Contacts

Training for Excellence in Interpretation

Overall training needs for visitor center staff members include skill development in such areas as supervision, budget management, creative thinking, leadership, and personal effectiveness. Courses in these topical areas are readily avalilable from a variety of government and private sources. But along with these, quality interpretive skills training is essential.

Recognizing that visitor center staff members come to their jobs with varying amounts of interpretive training, two types of interpretive training should be provided. 1) the long term training needs of permanent staff, and 2) the seasonal training needs of short term staff members. It is the responsibility of the visitor center director or manager to assure that these training opportunities are provided. Through quality interpretive training we nurture quality interpretive programs.

Career-long Interpretive Training:

Recognizing the importance of comprehensive interpretive training, the Forese Service is developing Interpretive Services Training Standards. (see Appendix D) Draft standards build from Beginning Forest Interpreter (Level I) and Foret Interpreter (Level II), to Advanced Forest Interpreter (Level III) and Master Forest Interpreter (Level IV). These standards call out specific skill areas which promote effectiveness in Interpretive Services from entry level positions to interpretive program management. Opportunities for training in the various skill areas are widely available across the U.S. Some of these include:

* Forest Service sponsored Basic Interpretive Skills Workshops, such as those offered in Portland, OR and Asheville, North Carolina in the fall of 1992.
* National Park Service Interpretive Training offered each year at the Albright Training Center, Grand Canyon National Park.
* Army Corps of Engineers Interpretive Training.
* Regional and National Interpretive Training offered each year through the National Association of Interpretation.
* Training sessions offered by various colleges, universities and interpretive consultants.

(For information on these training opportunities, see list of Interpretive Training Contacts at the end of this section.)

These kinds of training opportunities offer many alternatives for providing career interpreters and returning seasonal staff with the overall interpretive skills they need.

"Seasonal" Interpretive Training:

While the courses mentioned above meet the needs of many full time and long term staff, "seasonal" interpretive training is also needed to fulfill the needs of "busy season" staff, including youth workers, volunteers, and other short term visitor center employees. Seasonal training is extremely important, serving as a time for staff to learn about the area, the visitor center program, center operation, and to learn (or reinforce) basic interpretive skills.

Most visitor centers already offer annual seasonal training sessions. These programs typically last from a few days to two weeks in length, depending on the size of the program, and often include follow up workshops or seminars at various times during the season. Some areas, such as Lake Tahoe Basin Visitor Center on the Tahoe National Forest send out pre-training materials which include background readings on interpretation. Other areas also include information on the Forest Service and visitor center programs. This type of pre reading can be very useful in answering common questions of new employees and in laying a foundation upon which the actual training session can build. When developing pre-training packets, be careful not to make them bulky or highly technical. Concise, inspiring, and easy-to-read materials are most useful.

In some locations, such as Monterey Bay Aquarium and Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument, integration of interpretive skills training, information on natural history, and practical experience are emphasised. (See "Volunteer Training" portion of section titled **Volunteers** for overview of Monterey Bay Aquarium training.)

Interpretive Training at Mount St. Helens:

Interpretive training for staff at the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center includes a spring interpretive training session, summer field seminars, summer field days and exchanges with field staff, plus mid-winter seminars. Each component of training fills an important need for different members of the center staff. A description of these four training components follow.

Spring Interpretive Training:

Spring interpretive training is a week-long workshop geared primarily to new and returning summer interpreters. Most full time staff and returning seasonal staff assist with putting on the session which includes a day of orientation and team building, two days of seminars, and two days of field activities. The session is scheduled during the first week of work for most seasonal employees. Seasonal training at Mount St. Helens includes the following objectives:

* Provide answers to the following questions: What does the Forest Service do? What is the purpose of the National Monument and the goal of the visitor center?
* Provide an overview of the natural and cultural history of Mount St. Helens and the surrounding area as well as a comparison of Mount St. Helens to other volcanic areas of the world. This answers the questions: What do we interpret here? What's important about this area?
* Provide skills training in thematic interpretation.
* Provide an overview of learning styles preferences among people.
* Present "model" interpretive talks around visitor center exhibits and at field interpretive sites. Also, present model interpretive walks and demonstrations of successful "roving techniques" which can be applied both inside the visitor center and at outdoor locations.
* Demonstrate ways of creating a "dynamic" front desk environment, including discussion of customer service skills and working with "difficult" visitors.
* Provide field trips to areas of major visitor interest.

* Provide a non threatening setting in which each interpreter prepares and presents a sample 3 minute interpretive talk or "rove" in order to practice the combining of newly learned interpretive skills and information about Mount St. Helens.
* Provide skills for critiquing and evaluating interpretive programs.
* Provide orientation to visitor center operations including policies, proceedures, center reference library, etc.
* Promote a work environment which emphasises teamwork, creativity, wellness, and excellence.

Excerpts from a Mount St. Helens seasonal interpretive training notebook are included as Appendix E.

Summer Field Seminars:

Several summer seminars are offered each year which allow staff to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of some aspect of the Mount St. Helens story. Seminars last from four hours to a full day and topics range from seismology and cave ecology to the recolonization of the eruption impact area at Mount St Helens. Seminars keep staff members challenged and growing in their knowledge of Mount St. Helens following basic spring training. Plus, since seminars are often held in less travelled parts of the area, they provide an opportunity for staff to become familiar with a "new" part of the Monument.

Staff Exchanges:

Opportunities abound for staff members to trade places for the day. Typically, this allows for visitor center staff to spend a day in the field while a field staff person comes to work at the center. Such a program broadens staff member experiences. It allows a "change of pace" for each person along with providing an opportunity to learn more about what is happening in the field or at the center. Similar exchanges have also been made between National Forest interpreters at MSH and National Park Service interpreters at Mount Rainier. Interagency exchanges have usually been made between "veteran" interpreters in each agency, allowing for increased knowledge and career growth. These exchanges have resulted in a strong bond between the Park Service and the Forest Service

Winter Seminars:

Winter seminars are valuable for full time staff and year 'round volunteers. Sessions usually last two or three hours and are held at the center. Popular seminar presenters have included geologists, ecologists, and archaeologists who share insights on the cultural and natural history of MSH. One seminar expanded to include several school programs. It featured an astronaut who had photographed MSH and many other earth features from the space shuttle. He shared that the earth is diverse and beautiful from space and that we must all do our part to help sustain it. What seminar opportunities can you imagine for your center? Is the sky the limit ?

Interpretive Training Brainstorm List:

In addition to the six types of interpretive training identified above, there are others, too numerous to elaborate on in this Guide, which you may want to consider. After looking over this list, what other ideas come to your mind?

** Develop and send out a pre training video about your area and program.
** Send out an enthusiastic welcoming letter to new employees.
** Have a pot luck, fun, and seminar day in which volunteers, staff and other Forest Service staff get together to learn. Have the seminar presentation made by a specialist plus have social time and healthy food together.
** Plan a Partners Celebration & Update Day, involving one or many partners. Plan the time to update everyone on the scope of the center program and how the partners each fit into the whole picture. Present Certificates of Appreciation or other awards to each partner.
** Schedule cross training with staff from other Forest Service offices. They learn what you do and you learn what they do so that some day when you need some extra help, they're trained and ready to help. Also so that you can return the favor when they need a hand. (This shows center support for other Forest Service programs while also generating support for the center.)
** Invite local residents to attnd portions of training or, when appropriate, to make a presentation for training.

** Field Days: Allow one or two staff members at a time to take a day in "the field". They might visit a distant point of interest in the forest, hike a trail, or just "be a visitor" for a day. Along the way, they could also check mileages and driving times between key points, drop off National Forest info at Chambers of Commerce, get excited about what's out there, and bring that renewed energy back to the center.

** Schedule trades with other agencies.

** Invite nearby Chambers of Commerce representatives, tourism offices, business owners, and media to a "pre season" orientation program. The idea is to help all tourism related people from your region become better and more fully informed of your area, your center and your central theme/message/purpose.

** Take visitor center staff on a day-long field trip to another nearby interpretive center or point of interest in order to learn about your "neighbors" and their programs. Use the opportunity to build team spirit among your staff, to promote wellness, and to say "thanks" for all their good work.

** Sign up a staff member for a field seminar on a topic related to your program. Ask that upon returning, they make a short presentation with slides to share what they learned.

** Invite a regional poet, writer, or artist to come to your center to share what they've created to express their feelings about your part of the country. In exchange, share with the artist what you're interpreting. Interesting things can emerge from this.

** Sponsor a special speaker to come to the area. Recruit partners to help cover the costs. Share with visitors, staff, schools, community.

** Cross training with concessionaires. Interpreters are not the only individuals who should be included in training. Maintenance staff, book sales staff, concession operation staff, and anyone else connected with your program should receive training on the purpose of the center and it's centeral theme/purpose.

Excellence in visitor center programs is directly connected to the skill level, knowledge, and dedication of visitor center staff members. Well organized, ongoing training opportunities are a key element in developing excellent visitor center programs.

Training Recommendations:

Visitor center managers must look carefully at the training needs of visitor center staff. Interpretive training for seasonal staff and volunteers is critical, and training for long term permanent staff cannot be overlooked. In order to assemble the right blend of training opportunities for your center's staff members, consider the seasonal training program at Mount St. Helens presented in this chapter. Also, review the Monterey Bay volunteer training model as discussed in the chapter titled **Volunteers**. The Interpretive Training Brainstorm List adds further suggestions.

Excellence in visitor center programs is directly connected to the skill level, knowledge, and dedication of visitor center staff members. Well organized, ongoing training opportunities are a key element in developing excellent visitor center programs.

Recommended Books and References:

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Tilden, Freeman. 1957. Interpreting Our Heritage. University of North Carolina Press. Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Training Contacts:

Albright Employee Development Center
National Park Service
P.O. Box 477
Grand Canyon, AZ 86023
(602) 638-2691

D & M Bucy and Associates
2921 NW Hayes
Corvallis, OR 97330
(503) 758-3502

Interpretive Management Associates
263 Aspen Drive
Divide, Colorado 80814-9692
(719) 687-0160

National Association for Interpretation
P.O. Box 1892
Fort Collins, Colordo 80522
(303) 491-6434

TEAM Interpretation
15 Chilton St.
Belmont, MA 02178
(617) 484-3634

USDA Forest Service
(Contact your Regional Interpretive Services Coordinator.
Regional Coordinator Directory is included as Appendix F.)

John Ververka & Associates
P.O. Box 26095
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 394-5355

Budget Stretching Strategies

Contents

Introduction

Base Budgets

Partnerships

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Partnerships

Budget Stretching Brainstorm List

- Interpretive Association Bookstores
- Friends Groups
- Human Resource Programs
- Donation Walls
- Resort Naturalists
- Concessions
- Fundraising for Interpretation
- Other Brainstorm Ideas

Budget Stretching Recommendations

References

Recommended Reference Materials

Budget Stretching

Introduction

"As a new century dawns", writes Gary Machlis (Ham, 1992) "a budgetary crisis confronts social services in all levels of government... It is unlikely to disappear any time soon. One of the most common (and sincerely felt) complaints of interpreters is that they are unable to do their jobs without more money. Small budgets are relative (even the interpreter with a $100,000 operating budget can feel strapped for funds), yet lack of money should not be an obstacle to practicing the craft of environmental interpretation." Machlis is exactly right. But where to we start, or continue, with making our programs successful when budgets seem smaller and smaller?

Robert Mercer (1992) suggests that we begin by envisioning "the agency budget as an endowment. In most non-profits there is an endowment fund which insures the minimal solvency of the agency. The base staff and utilities are paid." Next Mercer says to "picture how much you could bring into your facility by hustling grants, fees for services, fundraising, and acting like the non-profit organization you really are." Building partnerships and stretching budgets takes a lot of work, but the results can be very rewarding. Successful budget stretching allows us to "stretch" our seasons of operation and increase or improve the services we provide.

Base Budgets

Before working to "stretch" our budgets we all need to work effectively within our established budget development processes. In the Forest Service this means being certain that out year budget requests (requests for the next 3 to 5 years) are completed in the fall, and that the funding level requested is clearly justified. Even though these requests are not always met, there's little room for disappointment over a low budget if an appropriate and timely request was never made during out year planning.

It is "politically astute" to garner internal support for your budget needs. Think of it almost as developing and nurturing a "friends" group within the agency that is understanding and supportive. This can be done in many ways. Here are 3 ideas:

1) Develop a cover letter to accompany budget requests which quote use counts, visitor contacts, number of interpretive programs given, etc. It might also include copies of complimentary letters (or complaints!) from visitors which further justify the budget request.

2) Develop an annual or year end report, once again highlighting success and achievements of the past year. This report can then be sent to any and all agency staff connected with the program as well as to partners and others who have influence on budget matters.

3) Invite Forest Service staff to come and assist at the center for a day. This allows staff from Regional, Forest, and/or District offices to come and "experience" the center, to see first hand how things are going, and to observe some of the center's needs. It is also a time for Forest Service staff from various offices to hear the center's voices and messages, to get to know each other better, to roll up their sleeves together, and to just have some fun.

Whatever strategy you select for rallying agency support, be sure to quantify "what you get" at various funding levels: Equate dollars with services that can be rendered.

Following is an excerpt from a letter from Mount St. Helens which defines a basic visitor center program and outlines what can and cannot be done on various days at the given budget level. Roving contacts are included with Information Desk time while interpretive programs are included in Administrative and Special Project times. Additional staffing through the Human Resource Program allows for further interpretive program time.

Interpretive Staffing for Mount St. Helens Visitor Center

Winter Program and Staffing

From October through April, the center is open from 9:00am-5:00pm. Staff work a regular 8 hour/5 day schedule with a 45 minute lunch. They arrive at 8:30am and work until 5:15pm. This is adequate to cover both the opening and closing of the center in one shift. During the winter months, NWIA sales are usually handled by the interpretive staff. A NWIA cashier and/or a Senior Program (SCSEP) employee are available on a case by case basis to meet special needs.

The following displays winter staffing needs. Currently, we have a volunteer available for each day of the week.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
GS-9 Director	X	X	X	X	X		
GS-7 Asst Dir			X	X	X	X	X
GS-5 Lead	X	X			X	X	X
GS-4 Interp	X	X	X	X	X		
GS-4 Interp			X	X	X	X	X
Volunteers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	4	4	5	5	6	4	4

The following depicts the duties of staff at various levels:

Four Employees:
1) Information Desk/Operate Theater / Roving
2) Phones/Correspondence
3) Information Desk/Sales/Lunch Coverage (Volunteer)
4) Administration (must remain on-site)

Five Employees:
1) Information Desk/Operate Theater / Roving
2) Phones/Corresondence
3) Information Desk/Sales/Lunch Coverage (Volunteer)
4) Administration (must remain on-site)
5) Administration/Special Projects (on- or off-site) and interpretive programs

Six Employees:
1) Information Desk/Operate Theater
2) Phones/Corresondence
3) Information Desk/Sales/Lunch Coverage (Volunteer)
4) Administration (must remain on-site)
5) Administration (on- or off-site) and interpretive programs
6) Special Projects (on- or off-site) and interp programs

Based on the above scenarios, we would provide information desk staffing, NWIA sales, theater operations, and phone coverage whenever the center is open. We could provide a short orientation for visiting school groups each day during the hours when we have a volunteer working, before or after lunch coverage. On Fridays through Mondays, one staff person could participate in a meeting as long as it was on-site. On Tuesdays through Thursday, two staff would be available to participate in on-site meetings or one could travel to an off-site meeting. On Thursdays, up to three staff could participate in an on-site meeting or two could travel off-site. Thursdays would also provide one day each week when a staff meeting could be conducted.

Then, when budgets are set each year, be certain that a Project Work Plan is developed which can guide spending through the year. Evidence that budgets have been well managed can then accompany well-written requests for increased budget allocations and be very convincing.

In any case, your budget process is critically important to you. For even if it does not provide you with the full budget to do the work that needs to be done, it does provide you with a core budget, like sourdough starter or an endowment, from which a creatively designed budget can grow.

Partnerships:

One of the cornerstones of the Forest Service's Recreation Strategy is the importance of developing partnerships to assist us in providing excellent recreation facilities and programs. Across the nation, visitor centers have established hundreds and thousands of partnerships which have allowed visitor center programs to expand and grow far beyond what base budgets would have allowed.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Partnerships:

Within the National Park Service, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) has persued partnerships to an astounding level. Park partners at GGNRA account for more than four million dollars in revenue for the park each year. In addition, Park Partner Groups annually make nearly two million visitor contacts for the NRA, with nearly 140,000 volunteer hours donated in 1992.

Although many of our visitor centers are located far from "human resource rich" areas such as San Francisco, the example of GGNRA does model for us the potential that exixts where we have visitor centers and interpretive programs located near urban areas. Whether your visitor center program is large, with many partners, or small with seemingly limited opportunities for partnerships, there may still be some valuable opportunities to extend your program and "stretch" your budget.

The following "Brainstorm List" might serve to help you on the road to a successful new partner and in making your excellent program an even greater success.

Budget Stretching Brainstorm List

Interpretive Association Bookstores:

Bookstores, operated by our Interpretive Associations, provide visitors with the opportunity to purchase books and interpretive materials when their interest is at it's peak. These materials can extend their learning about your area long after they have returned home. Books, posters, videos, and other items can also become interpretive tools which visitors use to share their experience of your area with friends and family after returning home.

If your bookstore is not currently supporting your program in a significant way, you should evaluate it carefully. Is your cooperative agreement set up properly? Are you getting as much return from the sales program as you should? Is the association providing visitors to your area with the services that it should?

If you answer any of the above questions "no" or "I'm not sure" you should talk with your forest and regional coordinators to see if there are some things you can do to improve on the agreement, to redesign your sales area, or to streamline your sales proceedures. The Forest Service publication "A Guide to Interpretive Associations in the National Forests", available through Forest Service Regional Coordinators, offers many good suggestions for making your Interpretive Association a stronger partner.

Successful bookstore programs can become self supporting, with store managers and cashiers paid through the cooperating association. They can also provide funding assistance for special projects and a source for collecting donations for use in your area. In short, Interpretive Associatins can become one of the visitor center manager's strongest, steadiest partners in helping to stretch the budget.

Reality Check:

In some instances, associations have literally taken over a visitor center when a center became weak and poorly funded. Associations should support the interpretive program of the center but should not become the whole program. At the same time, if an association is not being managed well or is not providing the services it should, steps should be taken to strengthen and revitalize it or a new partner should be established.

Friends Groups:

Friends groups have been established in Forests and Parks across the country with varying degrees of success. While it's clear that a Friends group is not always destined for success, it is possible that such a group is exactly what your area needs.

Friends of Timberline Lodge and Friends of Vista House, both associated with the Mount Hood National Forest in Oregon, are examples of highly successful "Friends of" groups raising large amounts of money, recruiting volunteers, and supporting interpretation in their respective areas.

Robert Mercer is a strong advocate of the value of Friends Groups, believing that they provide us with "room for expansion into excellence". His article on establishing a Friends organization which appeared in the Association of Nature Center Administrators newsletter "Directions" (1992) provides insights into the success of the Friends of Silver Lake Nature Center and suggestions for starting a Friends group. (See "Membership and Involvement in Professional Organizatins" in **Visitor Center Management Tools** section for information on "Directions" newsletter.

Human Resource Programs:

Human Resource Programs can greatly expand your ability to provide interpretation and visitor services by providing additional staff to supplement your core group. Human Resource Programs can also provide additional diversity to your staff. Whether the supplemental staff person comes as a volunteer or has a portion of their salary paid through another agency or organization, a Human Resource Program can be extremely valuable to your program.

At the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center, the Human Resource Program provides the equivelent salary benefits of over $50,000 each year. The program includes staff members coming to work through:

* the local community college
* youth programs
* senior volunteers
* work release programs from the county jail
* juvenile offenders program
* staff paid through our cooperating interpretive association
* our adjacent State Park
* a regional gardening club
* the YWCA
* Senior Citizen Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
* Kiwanis Club
* Washington State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
* etc.

Many similar programs are probably available in your area. What Human Resource Program opportunities might work for you? Make contacts with your local schools, service organizations, outdoor groups, and others to see what additional opportunities you may have.

Donor Plaques, Donation Walls, Etc:

Many visitor centers have been successful with establishing "Donation Walls" or "Donation Plaques" of some type. For example, the Flagstaff Hill Visitor Center along the National Historic Oregon Trail in Baker City, Oregon has established a very popular series of donation tiles. The individual tiles are purchased by individuals or corporations and placed into the tile arrangements. Ranging in price from $50 to $50,000 the tiles are engraved with the donor's name(s) and included in either a floor or wall tile arrangement. The program is a win/win. On the one hand, the donor knows they're contributing to the success of an important visitor center interpretive program and receiving recognition for it. While, on the other hand, the Bureau of Land Management, which operates the center, benefits from the revenue generated. This type of program has potential in many of our visitor centers

Resort Naturalists:

The Superior and Chippewa National Forests of Minnesota and Wisconsin have developed a successsful "Resort Naturalist" program. Through it, the Forest Service recruits, places, trains, and supports interpreters who go to work for the season at various resorts. Resort operators provide living quarters, board, per diem and/or salary in return for interpretive services for their guests. Although not directly based in visitor centers, these programs extend interpretive programming out to where the people are. There may be similar opportunities to extend the programs of your center and area.

For information on Resort Naturalists, contact: Superior National Forest
LaCroix Ranger District
P.O. Box 1085
Cook, Minnesota, 55723
(218) 666-5251

Concessions:

Many National Forest areas have concession operations providing some type of service for visitors. This may be in the form of providing campground management, food service, etc. If this is true in your area or if you are considering concession operated services, Jane Anderson (1992) recommends thinking of your concession service as a program "extender" and suggests that you look at ways of having your concessioner provide such services as:

* interpretive brochures which are based on your area's themes.
* menus, placemats, and table tents which include important area themes and resource protection messages.
* key information on the area to be ncluded in concession advertising.
* tastefully produced reusable cups (in food service areas) carrying an interpretive message and graphic.
* gift shop items carrying messages which reinforce the theme of the area.
* videos on the area, produced in cooperation with the agency.
* joint development of exhibits to be located in concession area.
* sponsorship of environmental education programs promoting recycling, conservation of energy, etc.
* well informed personnel, trained along with other interpretive staff each year.

Concession agreements, such as at Mount St. Helens, can also be written to specify that the concessionaire will fund the hiring of interpreters, provide visitor cleaning, provide litter pick up on site, etc. Be sure that if you have a concession operation in your area that your program and your visitors are getting full benefits from it.

Fundraising for interpretation:

There are countless ways of raising funds to support interpretive programs and they can easily be coordinated through interpretive associations, friends groups, or foundations. In California, the Monterey Bay Natural Historical Association works in cooperation with the State Department of Parks and Recreation, supporting educational and interpretive activities within the parks. They serve as a good example of how fundraising can be approached to support interpretation. A brief description of their work follows.

FUNDRAISING FOR INTERPRETATION

The Monterey Bay Natural Historical Association is a nonprofit cooperating association that works to fund interpretation at the state parks in the Pajaro Coast District of California. MBNHA is in the relatively unique position of being successful at raising funds for interpretive staff, programs, visitor centers and exhibits. MBNHA has been able to maintain an annual budget of close to $500,000 for the last few years. The types of fundraising which have been the most successful for our organization over the years include the following types of endeavors:

Fee collection by the Association
Wood Sales
Bookstores
Events

Fee collection by MBNHA employees is our primary source of revenue. Basically, the State Department of Parks and Recreation does not have enough money to hire someone to collect day use and camping fees at all of the State Parks in the Pajaro Coast District year round. So, MBNHA has entered into a contract to hire people to collect the fees when the State is unable to do so. MBNHA keeps 30% of what is collected and gives the remaining 70% to the State. For the 1992 calendar year MBNHA will keep approximately $336,000 as our percentage of the fees collected.

This is obviously a win-win situation for MBNHA and the State. The State receives revenue without incurring an expense, and MBNHA secures a large source of revenue which enables the funding of numerous interpretive programs, facilities and exhibits. Coordinating the fee collection program does take a fair amount of MBNHA staff time.

Wood Sales within the state parks has been MBNHA's second largest source of revenue over the last several years. We accommodate campers at several coastal parks year round. MBNHA also distributes with each bag of wood sold an interpretive flier describing the importance of downed wood to the ecosystem and why it should not be gathered for camp fires. MBNHA collects approximately $42,000 per year from wood sales. This takes very little time on MBNHA's part.

Bookstores located at four state parks within our district are also becoming a major source of revenue for MBNHA. Each bookstore is located within a visitor center. The visitor center is thus an interpretive location as well as an opportunity to raise funds. Although the bookstores have only accounted for $30,000 to $50,000 in annual sales thus far, we are expecting to double our sales in the coming year. MBNHA employs a part-time bookstore coordinator to handle all bookstore needs, although volunteers actually staff the bookstores.

Events held throughout the year have not been a high source of revenue for MBNHA. These events are wonderful interpretive activities, however, they typically require tremendous staff and volunteer time, and do not clear a large

profit. However, by focusing on one large event in 1992 MBNHA was able to begin an annual tradition that should show significantly higher profit as it grows each year. We held our first annual mountain bike race and fun ride at Wilder Ranch State Park this year and actually cleared a profit of close to $4,000. We expect to gain more sponsors and higher participation each succeeding year we hold the event.

In conclusion, MBNHA benefits from a varied source of revenues. Although our primary source of funding is from one activity, this activity provides a financial stability while MBNHA extends greater effort into developing the other channels of fundraising for the organization. Diversity of funding is essential in order to have uninterrupted funding for programs through the years.

Monterey Bay Natural Historical Association
101 Madeline Drive
Aptos, CA 95003

(408) 662-0178

Other Budget Stretching Ideas:

Grants
Foundations
Living History Groups
National Forest Funding for special needs
    * Forest Capital Investment funding
    * America's Great Outdoors Initiative
    * Challenge Cost Share Programs
    * Regional Forester Challenge funding
Donations to Forest Service
Donations through Interpretive Associations
Special Hiring Authorities
Endowments
Living Trusts
Special interpretive programs for a fee
Living History Groups
Special Hiring Authorities
National Forests Foundation

Budget Stretching Recommendations:

Successful budget management begins by working wisely within our established budget development processes. After promoting your budget needs, spend your allocated dollars wisely and document your accomplishments at year-end. "Stretch" this budget through partnerships and other ideas identified in this chapter's "Brainstorm List".

While large areas like the Golden Gate National Recreation Area may benefit from dozens of partnerships, a smaller program may find just the right budget stretching support through one or two appropriate partners. Be creative, think positively, and make your program all that it can be.

References Cited:

Mercer, Robert. June/July, 1991. "Establishing a Working Friends of... Organization". pp 2,4-5. Directions.

Recommended Reference Materials:

McCurley, Steve and Vineyard, Sue. 1986. 101 Ways to Raise Resources. Heritage Arts. Downer's Grove, Illinois.

Treobald, Mary Miley. 1991. Museum Store Management. American Association of State and Local History. Nashville, Tennessee.

USDA Forest Service and National Forest Interpretive Associations. 1986. A Guide to Interpretive Associations in the National Forests. U.S . Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C.

USDA Forest Service. 1986. A Guide to Attracting and Managing On-Site Donations for the Forest Service. USDA Forest Service. Washington, D.C.

Volunteers

Contents

Reality Check

Job Descriptions

Recruitment

Training

Evaluation

Supervision

Nurturing

Sabino Canyon Success

Win/Win/Win

A Handbook for Supervisors of Volunteers

Conclusions and Recommendations

References Cited

Recommended Books and Reference Materials

Volunteers

Volunteers are probably the most widespread budget stretching strategy utilized by visitor centers everywhere. From a single volunteer with a flexible schedule to dozens of volunteers working tightly organized schedules, volunteers can allow visitor centers to provide extra measures of service that would not otherwise be possible.

Reality Check

It is important to acknowledge that there's no "free lunch" when it comes to volunteer programs. Creating and nurturing a volunteer program requires a lot of work. Before embarking on a volunteer program, be certain that you have full support for it within your organization and that you have a person for whom the responsibilities of "volunteer coordinator" is a key element of their job. Further, your center's budget must allow for the volunteers training, their uniforms, out-of-pocket expenses for each volunteer, and supervision/management of the program.

Job Descriptions

Job descriptions for volunteer positions are valuable in clarifying the work that needs to be done and matching potential volunteers to those jobs. Mona Enquist-Johnston and Tom Mullin (1991) recommend the following elements to be included in the job description:

* Title: Keep it simple yet accurate, depicting what the person will be doing (ie., graphic artist, teacher/naturalist).
* Goal: Provide the big picture. How does the job benefit you organization?
* Duties: A 3 to 4 sentence synopsis of specific job tasks. Provide enough detail so an individual will know what is expected and can decide if they want the job.
* Qualifications: Include prerequisites for the job, such as skills, interests and knowledge. Be as specific as necessary.
* Training: List the training you will provide and note which is required.

* Time Commitment: Specify your time requirements and expectations. This should include what you expect on a regular basis and an estimate of the long-term commitment (ie., one year commitment, 10 hours per week). This will help potential volunteers decide if your requirements meet their time availability.
* Supervisor: Specify the name, title, phone number and address (if necessary) of the position supervisor.
* Contact: Provide the name and pone number of the individual someone would contact if interested in the position.

Volunteer Recruitment:

Enquist-Johnston and Mullin go on to recommend the following plan for recruiting volunteers for your program:

* Objective: What do you wish to accomplish with the job?
* Target Audience: Review the qualifications listed in the job description. Think about the kind of person who could best fit those qualifications and consider the following:
    --Where do they spend their free time?
    --When are they available?
    --How will the job appeal to them?
* Marketing Strategies:
    --Product: Present your product from the volunteer viewpoint. What benefits or features does your job have that makes it unique? You should highlight these in your promotional pieces.
    --Place: Where is the job? Is travel necessary? Consider ways to make it more accessible to volunteers.
    --Price: What is it going to cost the volunteer to work for you (time, travel, every out-of-pocket expense)?
    --Promotion: Based on previous "P's", how can you get your message to your potential volunteers? Some potential tools include brochures, exhibits in public display areas, posters, asking current volunteers to recruit new volunteers, press releases and articles, radio, TV (commercial and cable). Developing a quality media list is essential to reaching the media in an effective manner.

Raymond Morris (1992) points out that nearly 70% of volunteers are recruited through personal contacts. Consider any possible way of personally meeting potential volunteers, including an open house or a special presentation at a location that is most convenient for them.

Volunteer Training:

Successful training should integrate information, interpretive skills, and practical experience in a balanced way. (Covel, 1992) At the Monterey Bay Aquarium, information from key subject areas is presented through classroom presentatins, field trips and lab sessions. Most class sessions connect into group activities which combine newly taught information with interpretive skills. Activities such as role playing are conducted around actual aquarium exhibits to give the exercises a realistic feeling. Each exercise seeks to:

1. Introduce the concept behind the skill and why this is an important interpretive tool.
2. Model or demonstrate the skill for the group.
3. Have the group members practice the skill.

Interpretive skills emphasised at the aquarium include:

1. Finding good information that lends itself to interpretation; how to interpret facts to make them more interesting.
2. Audience analysis techniques.
3. Aids to starting conversations with visitors.
4. Use of questioning techniques to invlve the audience and monitor retention and understanding.
5. Use of analogies to relate foreign concepts to visitors in familiar terms.
6. Using themes and transitions to tie information together for visitors and provide continuity in their learning experience.
7. Modeling appropriate behavior for visitors and other visitor-influencing techniques.
8. Ongoing self-evaluation and peer evaluation techniques to maintain and improve skills and information.

On going training includes field trips and evening programs. Information updates and minilessons (enrichment) are provided as part of the weekly schedule. Model volunteers serve as mentors to help with training new volunteers.

Volunteer Evaluation:

At Monterey Bay, the Aquarium offers a successful evaluation program as a model for others where similar needs and conditions apply. Their program identifies six key elements for evaluating factual accuracy and interpretive techniques of volunteers:

1. Evaluations should be non-threatening. Just the word inspires anxiety in many folks.
2. Evaluations should be interactive, allowing the volunteer to respond to comments and feedback.
3. Evaluations should consider the individual. While minimum standards apply to all, each individual should be challenged to do their personal best.
4. Evaluations should be consistent. The process must be standardized to a level where it is applied in the same way each time in order to avoid one volunteer receiving mixed messages from various staff members.
5. Documentation must be organized and detailed so that any staff member can follow up on evaluation performed by other staff.
6. Most importantly, the evaluation should be an opportunity to celebrate the success of the volunteer, and should not be applied or perceived as punitive, judgmental or critical.

Supervision:

Quality, supportive supervision is critical to the on-going success of a volunteer program. Remember that your volunteers are there in large part due to the fulfillment and satisfaction they get from the job. If they begin to feel abandoned at the job, or underappreciated in their work they are likely to be "out the door" in a hurry. Keep communication up and be ready to adjust their job assignments and schedules from time to time if they request a change.

Nurturing:

Although volunteers are clearly not "in it for the money", they certainly do appreciate recognition. Daily thank yous are in order along with potlucks or special lunches from time to time. "Volunteer Appreciation Night" is a special event held once each year at Mount St. Helens which typically includes dinner, fun, and awards.

A Highly Successful Program:

A strong volunteer program has been establishedon the Santa Catalina Ranger District of the Coronado National Forest. The Sabino Canyon Volunteer Naturalists have become a self sufficient group providing:

* tours of the canyon.
* environmental education materials for students.
* a full, ongoing training program for volunteer staff.
* motivation, recognition, and social activities for volunteers.

While some areas may not have the community resources to develop a program as extensive as the Sabino Canyon program, it does serve as a model of success in volunteer program development and can provide encouragement for other areas.

Win/Win/Win:

Many visitor centers have found that a well managed volunteer program is a "win" for everyone involved. It's a success for your volunteers by providing them with an oppportunity to be involved with a meaningful, rewarding experience. It's a success for the program in that volunteers very effectively stretch the budget by providing supplementary staffing. Volunteers also benefit the program by bringing it an added level of diversity including a range of ages and a "local" perspective. Finally, the visitor is the big winner by receiving the benefits of the expanded services provided by volunteers.

A Handbook for Supervisors of Volunteers:

The Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument has developed a Handbook for Supervisors of Volunteers. The Handbook provides supervisors of volunteers with guidelines and suggestions for management of the volunteer program at Mount St. Helens. It includes examples of forms, processes, and formats that have been successful. Following is the Table of Contents from the Handbook to show its scope and layout. Copies of the complete Handbook are available through the Forest Service Data General Computer System by contacting the R6INTERP Information Center Service. See Appendix G for information on how to access R6INTERP and for a listing of the Information Center contents as of Spring, 1993.

From: Handbook for Supervisors of Volunteers
Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION 2

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENTS 3

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AND VOLUNTEERING 4

REQUIRED RECORD KEEPING 11

REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL 12

REIMBURSEMENT FOR SUBSISTENCE AND MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES 15

PAYMENT OF FLAT RATE FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF SUBSTANCE AND MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES 15

AN EXAMPLE OF A PAYMENT PROCESS 17

SAMPLE OF VOLUNTEER REIMBURSEMENT WORKSHEET AND TIMESHEET 19

UNIFORMS, NAME TAG, PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION MATERIALS 22

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION/VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SYSTEM 23

TRAINING, SAFETY, SUPERVISION 23

TERMINATING THE VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT 25

VOLUNTEER ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORTS 25

RECOGNITION, AWARDS 26

TAP, TOUCH AMERICA PROGRAM 29

FS EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS AS VOLUNTEERS 29

VOLUNTEERS AND FIREFIGHTING 29

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS 29

MOUNT ST. HELENS NVM VOLUNTEER PROGRAM - DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES 31

UNUSUAL QUESTIONS 35

REFERENCES 37

APPENDICES 38
Thoughts on Supervision of Volunteers 39
Sample Format for Interviewing Volunteers 43
Questions for Job References 45
Post Interview Evaluation 47
Sample Letter to Welcome and Orient New Full-time Volunteers at Pine Creek 48
Sample Letter to Welcome and Orient New Full-time Volunteers at the Visitor Center 52
101 Ways to Give Recognition to Volunteers 57

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Volunteers can help stretch our budgets, while adding strength and diversity to our programs. But remember that a good volunteer program will be successful for the volunteer and the visitor as well as for the visitor center program.

To begin or to enhance your volunteer program, consider some of the ideas expressed in this chapter. Be sure to consult with your Forest or Regional Human Resource Program Coordinator and review the Handbook for Supervisors of Volunteers and other literature recommended in this chapter. When well planned and properly managed, volunteers can play an important role in the success of a visitor center interpretive program.

References Cited:

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Enquist-Jonston, Mona and Mullin, Tom. 1991. Keys to Volunteer Recruitment: Job Descriptions and Targeted Promotions. pp 90-92. Proceedings, NAI National Interpreter's Workshop. National Association for Interpretation. Fort Collins, Colorado.

Morris, Raymond W. 1990. Managing Volnteers in the 1990's. pp 32-34. Proceedings, NAI National Interpreter's Workshop. National Association for Interpretation. Fort Collins, Colorado.

Recommended Books and Reference Materials:

Volunteers in the National Forests. A series of 5 guidebooks:

* Welcome to the Forest Service
* A Guide to Working Safely
* Meeting the Visitor
* Techniques of Supervision
* Recruitment and Development of Volunteers

(The guidebooks, developed by the Forest Service are available through Forest Service Regional Human Resource Program Coordinators.)

Volunteer Management Series of VM Systems. A series of 5 booklets on managing volunter programs.
The booklets are available from:
VM Systems/Heritage Arts Publishing
1807 Prairie Ave.
Downer's Grove, IL 60515
(312) 964-1194.

Visitor Center Management Tools

Contents

Orientation Notebooks

Area Information Notebooks

Operation and Maintenance Plans

Emergency Plans

AV Handbooks

Staff Scheduling

Blocked Daily Work Schedules

Interpretive Libraries

Slide Files

Evaluation

- Interpretive Programs (Talks, Walks, etc.)
- Overall Interpretive Program
- Accessiblity

Membership and Involvement in Professional Organizations

- National Association for Interpretation
- Association of Nature Center Administrators
- American Association of Museums

Interpretive Sharing in the Forest Service

Conclusion and Recommendations

Visitor Center Management Tools

Visitor center managers have found a number tools extremely useful in the "nuts and bolts" operation of a center. These include a series of staff notebooks and guides. The following pages briefly define several useful tools used by many visitor center programs.

Orientation Notebooks:

From Blanchard Caverns in Arkansas to Lake Tahoe in California, orientation materials have been organized to assist new employees in more easily and quickly learning the basics about their new work area. Orientation materials also serve as useful references for employees, even after years of work in the area. A typical orientation notebook should include all the basic information a new employee needs to begin work at the center. This should include background, history, proceedures, policies, etc. Following is the Table of Contents for an Orientation Notebook used at the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center. It is an example of the subject areas that are important to include in an Orientation Notebook. A complete copy of this notebook is available through the Data General system by contacting the R6INTERP Information Center Service. See Appendix H for information on how to access R6INTERP.

MOUNT ST. HELENS VISITOR CENTER
ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

THE BIG PICTURE

1A. WELCOME
1B. THE FOREST SERVICE AND MOUNT ST.HELENS
1C. MOUNT ST. HELENS VISITOR CENTER - FACT SHEET
1D. VISITOR CENTER PROGRAM
1E. PHILOSOPHY OF CUSTOMER SERVICE
1F. WHO WORKS AT THE CENTER - ORGANIZATION CHART & LIST OF EMPLOYEES

PERSONNEL POLICIES & PROCEEDURES

2A. EMPOLYEE RESPONSIBILITY & CONDUCT
2B. TIME SHEETS, LEAVE
2C. UNIFORMS
2D. TRAINING
2E. WORK SCHEDULE, BLOCK SCHEDULES
2F. WELLNESS, SAFETY
2G. NFFE
2H. CONCERNS PROGRAM
2I. SEXUAL HARRASMENT

VISITOR CENTER PROCEEDURES

3A. OPENING/CLOSING THE VISITOR CENTER
3B. FRONT DESK DUTIES - "THE DYNAMIC DESK"
3C. PA SYSTEM, TELEPHONES, DG
3D. MAIL, WEATHER
3E. REFERENCES, USE COUNTS, RECORDS
3F. SCHOOL GROUPS, TOUR GROUPS

VISITOR CENTER POLICIES

4A. RADIOS
4B. RECYCLING, LUNCHROOM
4C. PRESS, MEDIA, CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS
4D. SILVER LAKE RM., LAB
4E. VEHICLES, KEYS, LICENCES
4F. LOST AND FOUND

NWIA - BOOK SALES

5A. PURPOSE OF NWIA
5B. CASH REGISTER OPERATION
5C. POLICIES

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

6A. CLIMBING
6B. HIKING
6C. OFF ROAD VEHICLES / MTN BIKES / HORSE USE
6D. SKI TRAILS
6E. FISHING, HUNTING
6F. APE CAVE

NATURAL HISTORY & CULTURAL HERITAGE

7A. GEOLOGIC STORY
7B. BIOLOGIC STORY
7C. CULTURAL HERITAGE

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

8A. INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLES

INFORMATION CENTERS

9A. MT.ST.HELENS VISITOR CENTER SILVER LAKE
9B. COLDWATER RIDGE VISITOR CENTER
9C. JOHNSTON RIDGE OBSERVATORY
9D. PINE CREEK INFORMATION CENTER
9E. APE CAVE INFORMATION CENTER
9F. WOODS CREEK

MAP POCKET IN BACK:

10A. * GP MAP
10B. * NVM MAP
10C. * SR 504 MAP

Area Information Notebook:

A companion to the Orientation Notebook is the Area Information Notebook. It serves as an "encyclopedia" for the center. It doesn't matter if you're an interpreter, a maintenance worker, a part time volunteer or the center director. If you are recognized as working at the center, visitors will ask you questions. With this in mind, it is extremely valuable to develop an Area Information Notebook which contains detailed information on a wide range of subjects. All staff members should be provided with the time to become familiar with the contents of the notebook and either have a personal copy of it or know where copies can be found. Copies of the notebook should be kept at the front information desk as well as at each desk where there is a telephone. Copies should also be kept in the center's reference library.

Once the notebook is compiled, keep it up to date. A good time to review for accuracy is just prior to the busy season. Encourage local area services to keep you informed of changes in their hours , prices, services, etc. When giving out information, be sure not to promote one business over another. Rather, offer the various alternatives and let the visitor choose.

Note: At Mount St. Helens, limited storage space prevents the keeping of dozens of different brochures on hand to pass out. As an alternative, key info is recorded in the notebook. Then, when visitors ask about motels, for example, they are shown the notebook section on motels. Visitors may then note the information of interest to them.

The following is a list of topics (Ham, 1992) which could become a Table of Contents for an Area Information Notebook.

** Emergency Services
** Interpretive Opportunities
** Recreation Opportunities
** Food & Lodging
** Vehicle Services
** Weather and Elevation Charts
** Visitor Transportation Services
** Other Services (Gifts, Banks, Churches)
** Natural and Cultural History of the Area
** Nearby Attractions & Information Centers

Visitor Center Comprehensive Operation and Maintenance Plan:

In order to properly maintain a visitor center structure, several reference tools are needed: 1) "as built" drawings
2) all specific O & M manuals describing how pumps, timers, equipment, etc work.
3) a comprehensive O & M Plan which connects #1 and #2 (above) and outlines the schedules and costs associated with maintaining the center.

Further, the O & M Plan assists visitor center managers in planning staffing and budgets. Following are the Tables of Contents from the Comprehensive O & M Plans for the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center and the Blanchard Springs Caverns Visitor Center. They are examples of how useful O & M Plans have been organized. A complete copy of the Mount St. Helens Plan is availavle through the Data General system by contacting the R6INTERP Information Center Service. See Appendix G for information on how to access R6INTERP.

From: Comprehensive Operation & Maintenance Plan
Mount St. Helens Visitor Center

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

INTENT..... 5
INTRODUCTION TO THE MOUNT ST.HELENS VISITOR CENTER..... 5
PLAN ORGANIZATION..... 6
FIXED OPERATION EXPENSES..... 7
Visitor Center Staffing.....8-13
Water.....14
Electricity.....14
Postage Meter.....14
Copy Machine.....16
Telephone Lines.....16
Alarm System.....16
HVAC.....17
Elevator.....17
Fire Sprinkler System.....17
Sanitation Services.....17
Sanitary Supplies.....18
Janitorial Services.....18
Vehicles.....18
Summary of Fixed Operation Expenses.....18
STRUCTURE MAINTENANCE: 20
Roofs.....20
Gutters and Downspouts.....20
Windows.....21
Storm Windows
Glass Cleaning
Doors.....22
Refinish Exterior Doors
Exterior Siding & Trim.....23
Interior Stone Work.....23
Interior Woodwork.....23
Window Frames
Clear Finished Walls
Information Counter
Wood Handrails
Interior Walls and Ceilings.....23
Theater Walls and Ceilings
Visitor Center Floors.....24
Interior Handrails.....24
Interior Finished Metals.....25
Stainless Steel
Brass
Displays/Exhibits.....25
Computer and Mechanical Components
Lighting
Photographs/Text/Refurbish, Replacement
Plexi-Glass and Glass
Exhibit Up-grade 26
HVAC System.....26
Maintenance Schedule
Air Balancing
System Replacement
Rest Rooms.....27
Toilets
Urinals
Partitions
Miscellaneous Fixtures
Air Compressor.....27

ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS.....28
Lighting Systems.....29
Interior Lighting
see also Displays/Exhibits
Emergency
Exterior Lighting
Street lights
Exterior Building Lighting
Plaza Walkway Lighting
Tunnel Lighting
Lighting Timers
Electrical Components.....30
CGFI Listing
Breakers and Switches
Ballasts, Capacitors and relays
Motors
Preventive Maintenance
Starters
Phase & Surge Protection
Troubleshooting
Emergency Repairs
GROUNDS MAINTENANCE.....32
Parking Lots and Adjacent Areas.....33
Parking Lot and Roadway Striping
Pavement Repair
Gravel Trails
Storm Drains.....33
Plaza Grates and Drains.....34
Vegetation Debris Removal.....34
Viewing Scopes.....34
Outdoor Display Signs.....34
Exterior Signs and Reflectors.....34
Tunnel and Kiosk Area.....35
Exposed Aggregate Sidewalks & Stone Work.....35
Fences.....35
Wood Barrier Fence
Mound System Chain Link Fence
Wood Pole Fence
Vegetation.....36
Benches.....36
Exterior Finished Metals.....36
Poles
Gates & Metal Handrails
Sewer System.....37
Septic Tanks
Sewer Pumps/Motors
Control Building At Mound
EQUIPMENT.....38
Fire & Safety equipment.....39
First Aid Kits
Fire Extinguishers
Combustible Storage Locker
Fire Hoses & Bibs
Safety Harnesses & Ropes
Protective Clothing

Maintenance equipment.....41
Hand/Power Tools & Equipment
Garbage Containers
Power Lift
Small Engine Powered Equipment
Cleaning & Maintenance Supplies
Office Equipment & Supplies.....42
Furniture/Appliances
Paper
Miscellaneous Office Equipment
Desk Calculators
Typewriter
Copy Machine
Postage Meter
Telecommunications System
Telephones
TDD Telephone
FAX Machine
Two-Way Radios
Data General Computer System
Cash Register Equipment & Supplies
Audio Visual Equipment.....45
A/V Equipment Service/Replacement.....46
Vehicles.....47

APPENDICIES.....48
Appendix A - Summary of Total Costs for 25 Years..49
Appendix B - Annual Maintenance Costs.....51
Appendix C - Schedule of Special Maintenance Costs for 25 Years.....52
Appendix D - Summary of WG Hours Required to Complete Maintenance.....75

From: Blanchard Springs Caverns

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE PLAN - FY-91

TABLE OF CONTENTS (INDEX)

1. Goals..... 3 - 5
2. FOOTNOTE - Maintenance - Blanchard Complex..... 6
3. VIC - Administrative Offices Maintenance Procedures..... 7
4. VIC - Groundskeeping Procedures..... 8
5. VIC - Exhibits Maintenance..... 9 - 12
6. Maintenance Procedures: Tours "A & B" Blanchard Caverns... 13 - 21
7. Landscape Maintenance Plan and Procedures..... 22 - 30
8. Roads and Trails Maintenance..... 31 - 32
9. VIC - Maintenance Schedule..... 33
10. Maintenance Procedures: Blanchard Complex Electrical Systems..... 34 - 38
11. Blanchard Complex Sewage Treatment System..... 39 - 50
12. Maintenance Procedure: Blanchard Complex Water System..... 51 - 54n
13. Potable Water Testing Schedule (See Supplements-Standards)..... 55
14. Program Management - Security..... 56 - 62
15. Health & Safety Action Plan..... 63 - 83
16. Security & Fee Compliance (Supplement to O&M Plan)..... 84 - 85
17. Law Enforcement Plan (Supplement to O&M Plan)..... 86 - 90
18. Water Supervision - Rescue Plan..... 91 - 92
19. PLANNED Inspections - Blanchard Complex & District..... 93 - 103
20. Facilities Self Protection Plan (Extreme Conditions).... 104 - 109
20. Daily Equipment Inspection Logs..... 110 - 130

Emergency Plan

It is essential that all visitor centers have up to date emergency plans and that all staff members are familiar with them. The Mount St. Helens Visitor Center has been developing and improving its Emergency Plan since the Center opened in 1986. The plan is reviewed and updated each year. Copies are kept at the front desk, each staff members desk and copies are also kept in the homes of several visitor center staff. The plan is kept in a bright orange, 3-ring binder so that it is easily recognized. The following Table of Contents displays the scope of the plan and can be a model upon which to develop an Emergency Plan for other centers. Copies are available through the Data General system by contacting the R6INTERP Information Center Service. See Appendix G for information on how to access R6INTERP.

REVISED: Feb 1993

Mount St. Helens Visitor Center
EMERGENCY PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Intent of the Emergency Plan

Emergency Phone Numbers

Visitor Center After-Hours Emergency Call-Down List

Evacuation Procedures and Maps

DETAILED INCIDENT RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Medical Emergencies

* Level Certification/Trained Employee List
* Accident/Injury/Illness
* Drowning/Near Drowning
* Missing Person

Natural Disasters

* Volcanic Eruption
* Forest Fire
* Earthquake
* Wind Storms

Building Emergencies

* Fire
* Fire/Security Alarm
* Power Outage
* Sewage Pump Station Alarm
* Volcano Model Flooded
* Elevator Emergency
* Hazardous Chemical Spill

Other Emergencies

* Law Enforcement Emergency
* Bomb Threats
* Sediment Dam Failure
* Trojan Nuclear Power Plant Emergency

Forms and Followup

* Press Contacts
* Accident Reports
* Critical Incident Stress Briefing
* Supply Inventories for Restocking

Audio Visual Handbook

Visitor centers which include theater projection equipment, electronic exhibit components or which occasionally show slide programs and movies should develop an AV Handbook. Such a notebook can describe basic "power up" and "power down" procedures for commonly used equipment and provide trouble shooting suggestions. While technical problems should always be handled by qualified staff or repair people, it is very helpful if basic daily O & M responsibilities can be shared by a number of staff members.

The Army Corps of Engineers' Bradford Island Visitor Center staff at Bonneville Dam has developed an Audio Visual Manual for their specific equipment. The manual is laid out like this:

- Introduction and Philosophy
- How to Use This Manual
  - Diagrams
  - Descriptions of Equipment
- Safety
- Possible AV Presentations
  - Movies (titles and descriptions)
  - Slide Programs (titles and descriptions)
- 16 mm Film Presentations--How to Set Up
- Single Slide Projector Programs--How to Set Up
- Two Projector Slide Programs--How to Set Up
- Three Projector Slide Programs--How to Set Up
- Aligning Multi Projector Programs
- Video Projection Presentations--How to Set Up
- Using a Microphone
- Trouble Shooting--All systems
- Other Uses for the Theater

The Bradford Island Manual serves as a good model for developing an AV Handbook. Following are a few pages from the Manual:

From: Bradford Island Visitor Center
at Bonneville Dam, Cascade Locks, Oregon

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to simplify the operation of the Bradford Island Theater booth equipment so that any one (as long as they can read) can operate it successfully.

The theater booth can appear to be intimidating to the uninitiated user. By following the procedure in this guide, any user should be able to successfully operate the audio-visual equipment in order to present an acceptable slide show or 16mm film. This manual deals only with equipment, not with presentation style. If you want to learn how to give and interpretive AV program, refer to your training manual.

PHILOSOPHY OF THEATER USE

The theater was included in the Bradford Island Visitor Center to enhance the Corps ability to share the missions of the Corps of Engineers with the public, using varied and effective media. Due to the versatility of the equipment there are excellent opportunities for effective interpretive messages.

The first priority for theater use will be given to programs which benefit the general public. The theater will accomodate one interpretive program every hour, as staffing allows during peak visitation periods. When visitation is not in a peak period, the theater will also be available for other used such as classes, training, meetings and seminars.

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

Go through the list below in numerical order following the directions.

1. Do you need to become familiar with the equipment in the theater booth?
   Yes...go to page 3
   No....go on to 2.

2. Do you need to become familiar with safety precautions in the theater booth?
   Yes...go to page 8
   No....go on to 3.

3. Do you want to present an AV, but are not sure what you want to show?
   Yes...go to page 9 for selection.
   If you are sure, go on to 4.

4. Are you going to show a 16 mm movie?
   Yes...go to page 11
   No....go on to 5.

5. Are you going to show a slide show?
   Yes...go to page 15
   No....go on to 6.

6. Are you going to show a video projection movie?
   Yes...go to page 32
   No....go on to 7.

7. Are you going to use a microphone?
   Yes...go to page 33
   No....go on to 8.

8. Can't figure out what's gone wrong with the equipment? Need some trouble shooting pointers?
   Yes...go to page 36
   No....go on to 9.

9. If you have gotten this far down the key and have not found what you intend to use the theater for, you are either (1) reading this manual for sheer enjoyment, or (2) you want to use the theater for other than AV purposes. (Turn to page 43 for hints.)

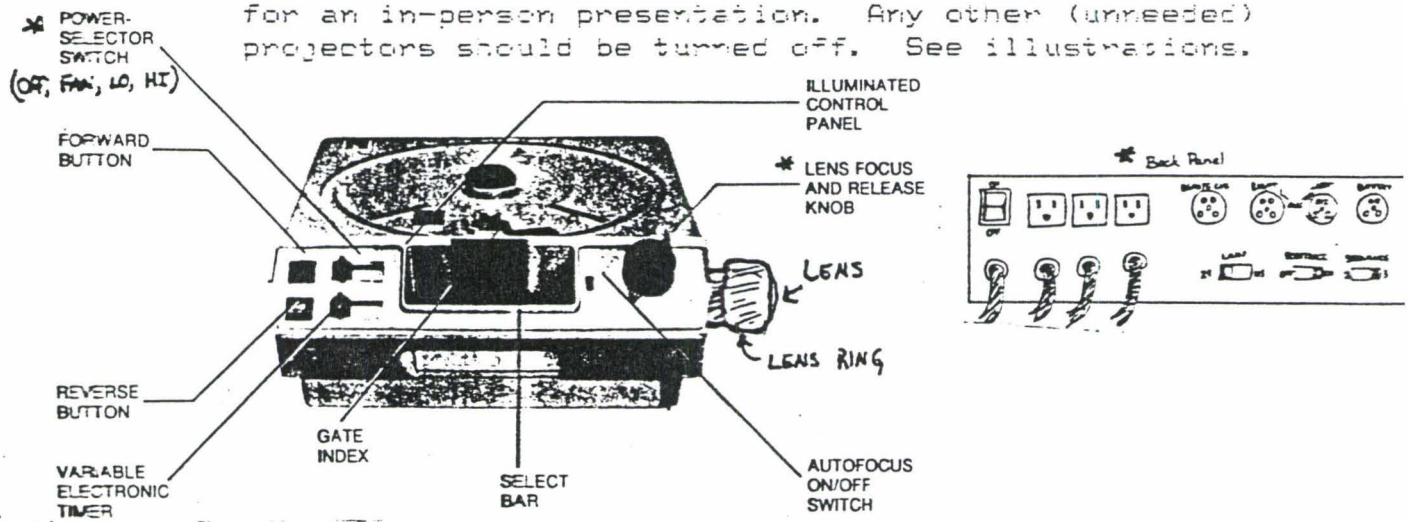
SINGLE STACK PROGRAMS

The "single" stack of slide projectors in the BIRVC theater booth is the most versatile because you can hook up a variety of dissolve systems quickly and easily. We use Entre', Sharpe, and AVL dissolve systems here. Also, the slide projectors in this stack can be controlled remotely from the front of the theater for an in-person presentation.

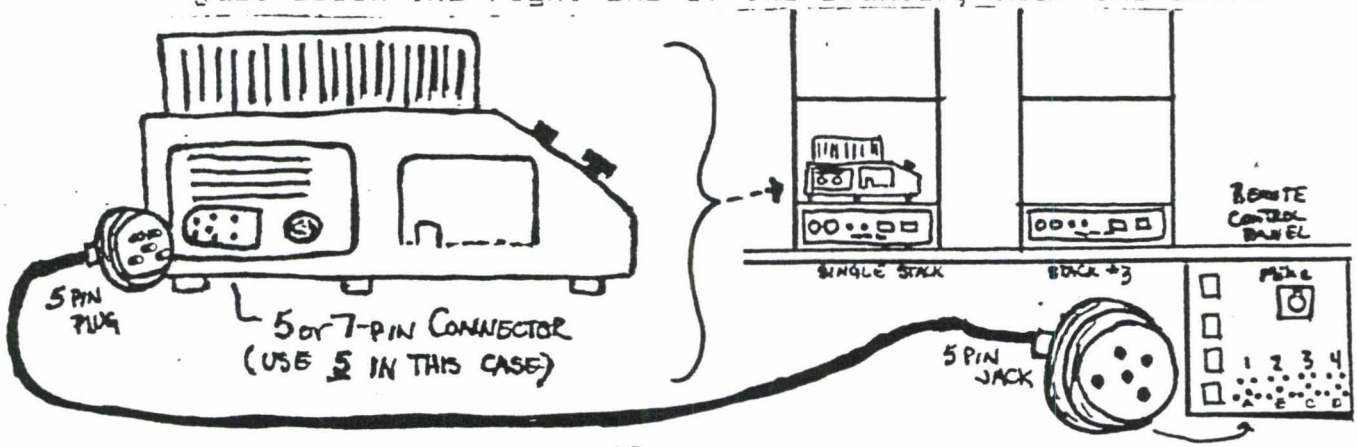
1. Setting up a Remote Control System for In-person Slide Presentation.

   a. Turn on all the breaker switches in the Breaker Box.

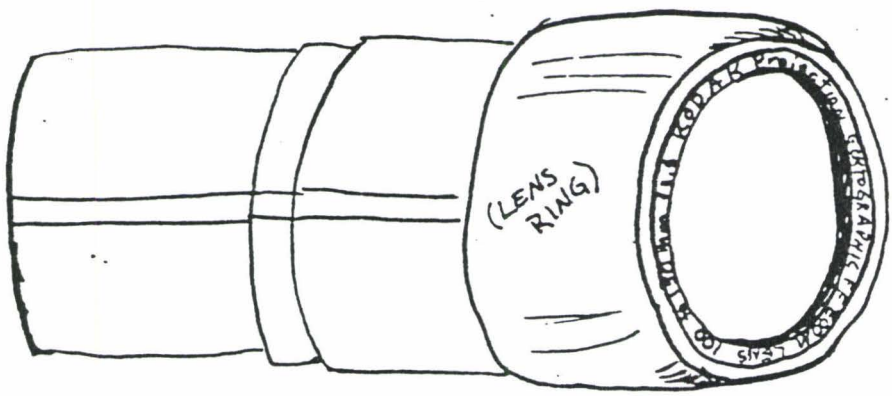
   b. The "Single Stack" is the second triple stack of projectors from the booth door. Make sure that each projector you will be using is on fan and that the AVL Dove unit is on. Usually only one projector is needed for an in-person presentation. Any other (unneeded) projectors should be turned off. See illustrations.



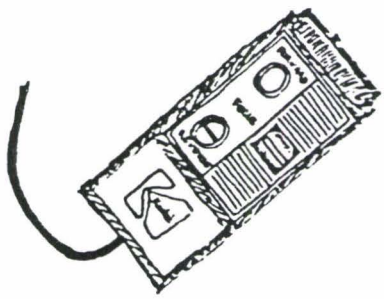
   c. Using a Slide Projector Extention Cord from the spare cords storage rack, (see 5-pin plug to 5-pin jack in diagram below) attach the plug end of the cord to the front of your projector and the other end (jack) to the "A" connection of the Remote Control Panel, which is just below the right end of the counter, near the door.



d. Slip your tray of slides into the projector with the zero slide slot lining up with the indent on the right side of the projector. Forward the projector to a slide to focus and zoom your picture to the size you desire. See illustration on the last page for the focus knob. To zoom, grasp the lense ring on the lense and rotate gently, watching the screen to see the change in size of the picture. (See illustration) Leave the power selector switch on "High".



e. Find a remote control unit (commonly known as a "pickle") and an extention cord if necessary on the spare cords storage rack. (See diagram below) Enter the theater with these items.



f. To the left and near the floor of the door at the front of the theater, you will see a small door, similar to the control panel above it. Behind it you will find more 5-pin connections similar to those you found on the Remote Control Panel in the booth. Attach your Pickle to the one labeled "A".

g. Test the system by pushing the forward, reverse, and focus buttons on your Pickle. If everything works, you are ready to use the system. If not, go back and check to make sure you made all the necessary connections.

**Testing the system is very important, otherwise you may end up looking like a fool in front of the visitors if something doesn't work right. So save yourself the embarassment by testing the syster!

TROUBLE SHOOTING

Can't figure out what's gone wrong? Find the appropriate piece of equipment and problem you are having below, and follow the suggested remedies. If you still can't fix it, call the AV Coordinator for further help. Most problems are easy to fix, and are usually just an overlooked button or switch that needs to be adjusted. Happy trouble shooting!!

16mm Projectors

1. **No power:** *Follow the source of the power to the piece of equipment to find the break in the system.

   check breakers
   check on/off button on the control panel
   check plug in the outlet
   check volume control knob on the projector

2. **No picture:**

   check master control switch, is it all the way forward?
   check lamp, is it burned out?

3. **No sound:**

   check volume control knob on the projector
   check sound bulb on the projector
   check film placement <u>under</u> the sound bulb.
   check breaker for the amp/mixer
   check volume on the mixer
   check phono plug from mixer to projector

4. **Film gets eaten:**

   Turn off the projector! **Very** carefully extract the film from the projector and try rethreading it if there are no major mangles or crunches in the film. If there <u>are</u> crinkles in the film, it will have to be spliced to get rid of them. If you know how to splice, go do it. If you do not, please contact the AV coordinator, or a Sr. Staff person who does, to help you.

5. **Film breaks:**

   Turn the projector off! **Very** carefully extract film from the projector. Carefully remove <u>both</u> reels. Take them to the library to splice the film back together. Only staff who have been trained may splice films. Make sure to fill out the splicing log in the lid of the film canister.

Staff Scheduling:

Developing an overall visitor center work schedule is complicated, especially when volunteers and other Human Resource Program staff members may work part time or intermittent schedules. On the following page is a schedule chart that has been successful at the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center. It tracks many varied work schedules on one chart, clarifying who works each day, who is scheduled to open and close the center each day, and who is "in charge" if the Director is not at the Center.

Changes in this schedule are first cleared with a staff member's supervisor and then confirmed with the scheduling coordinator. The Center Director must determine the minimum staffing necessary to operate the center's core program safely and efficiently. Staff scheduling must assure that this minumum staffing is provided for each day before meetings and special project time can be approved.

On days when staffing exceeds the minimum level, a "block schedule" provides set blocks of time during which staff members can focus on different parts of their job, including such components as information desk, roving interpretation, scheduled interpretive programs, and project work time. Staff meetings and special project work is scheduled on days when staff coverage is strongest.

MOUNT ST. HELENS VISITOR CENTER STAFF, SENIORS, AND VOLUNTEERS

FROM APR 04, 1993 TO MAY 01, 1993

	<---------- Pay-Period # 07 ---------->							<---------- Pay-Period # 08 ---------->																		
SPECIAL ACTIVITY																STY MTG												
Date(s)	APR 4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	MAY 1
	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
# ON HAND TO OPEN																												
Jan R.	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	# L8	OFF	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	S/L	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	# E8	OFF	OFF	OFF
Robert	@# *9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	OFF	@# *9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	# E8	OFF	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	TRN 8	TRN 8	TRN 8	TRN 8	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	OFF	OFF	OFF
Bernie	OFF	# E8	A/L 8	A/L 8	A/L 8	A/L 8	A/L 8	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# *9	@# *9	@# *9	OFF	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# *9	@#* L8	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# *9	@# *9	@# *9
Terry H.	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	OFF	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	# E8	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	OFF	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@ L8
Linda S.	OFF	@# 9	A/L 9	OFF	OFF	A/L 9	A/L 9	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@ L8	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	OFF	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9	@# 9	@ L8	OFF	OFF	@# 9	@# 9
OPERATION & MAINTENANCE														-> | <-														
Jerry		TRN 8	TRN 8	TRN 8	TRN 8	TRN 8	OFF	OFF	8	8	8	8	8	OFF	OFF	TRN 8	TRN 8	TRN 8	TRN 8	TRN 8	OFF	OFF	8	8	8	8	OFF	OFF
Mike	8	8	8	OFF	OFF	8	8	8	8	8	OFF	OFF	8	8	8	8	8	OFF	OFF	8	8	8	8	8	OFF	8	8	8
James Roban CC		-	-	-	-	-		6		-	-	-	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Debra Roban CC		-	-	-	-	-		6		-	-	-	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	
SENIOR COMMUNITY EMPLOYEMENT PROGRAM														-> | <-														
Mary Ann Creed	L 8				L 8	L 8	L 8					L 8	L 8	L 8					L 8	L 8	L 8	L 8			L 8	L 8	L 8	L 8
Mary Anna Steward	L 8L	L 8L	L 4	L 4				L 8	L 8	L 4	L 4				L 8	L 8	L 4	L 4				L 8	L 8	L 4	L 4			
NORTHWEST INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION																												
SUE	OFF	8	8	8	8	8	OFF	OFF	8	8	8	8	8	OFF	OFF	8	8	8	8	8	OFF	OFF	8	8	8	8	8	OFF
VOLUNTEERS:																												
SAT/SUN Don	6						6	6						6	6						6	6						6
MON Linda		6							6								6							6				
MON/TUE Lew		7	7						7	7						7	7						7	7				
TUE Grace			5							5							5							5				
WED Wimpy				7							7							7							7			
THU Lucille					5							5							5							5		
THU Marcia					6							6							6							6		
FRI Betty						7							7							7							7	
@ ON HAND TO CLOSE																												
Dates(s)	APR 4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	MAY 1
	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

-> | <-

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: _____

Acting Monument Manager for APRIL IS DAVE MATTILA, FOR MAY IT'S REED GARDNER, 247-5473, Mon-Fri

E = STARTS AT 0830/LEAVES AT 5PM, L = STARTS AT 0930 TILL CLOSING, *ACTING DIRECTOR, TRN = AT TRAINING, SFT= SAFETY/WELLNESS MEETING (AM ONLY).
# = On hand to OPEN, @ = On hand to CLOSE
MMT = Monument Team Meeting @ Headquarters.
revised 03/05/93

Blocked Daily Work Schedules:

Performing the same duties in the same place day after day in any job can become boring, demoralizing, and can easily lead to poor performance. By contrast, a varied schedule offering diversity and challenge can inject energy and life into the job. When planning visitor center work schedules, it is valuable to consider a type of Block Schedule which includes a variety of duties such as roving, front desk, telephones, program time, etc. Some form of Block Schedule is valuable for all members of the staff including volunteers and the director!

On the following page is an example of a Block Schedule which could be modified to work in other visitor centers.

DATE: _____

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	1:30	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
A	Power up A/V	Program Prep. / Program / Project and Lunch			Assist at Desk / Rove				Power down A/V	
B	Open upstairs	Administration / Phones and Lunch			Lead Desk				Close upstairs	
C	Power up down stairs	Assist at Desk / Rove			Program Prep. / Program / Project and Lunch				Power down down stairs	
D	Open down stairs	Lead Desk			Administration / Phones and Lunch				Close down stairs	
E										
F										
G										

TODAY'S STAFF:

MEETING ROOM SCHEDULE: _____

PROGRAMS: _____

_____

SPECIAL NOTES: _____

_____

_____

Interpreters' Library:

One of the most valuable resources in a visitor center is the library. Within the library are references to the area's history, geology, flora, and fauna as well as books and refenence materials on interpretive skills, interpretive planning, and environmental education. Together, these materials provide the reference and background needed for developing programs, displays, brochures, and for simply becoming knowledgable about the area.

Many different filing systems are used with success. Large libraries often use the Dewy Decimal System, while smaller libraries may simply organize books into a few key subject areas such as: Interpretation, Environmental Education, Geology, Biology, History, Field Guides, etc. Whatever system you choose to file your titles, be sure to have a sign out system and enforce it so you will know where to start looking if a book turns up missing.

While the titles for cultural and natural history selections will vary from one area to another, there are a number of outstanding interpretive references that no visitor center library should be without. Following is a list of twelve books that should be at the core of every visitor center's library:

* Cornell, Joseph. 1979. Sharing Nature With Children. Ananda Publications. Nevada City, CA.
* Edwards, Yorke. 1979. The Land Speaks: Organizing and Running an Interpretation System. The National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada. Toronto.
* Edelstein, Daniel. 1990. A Program Planner for Naturalists & Outdoor Educators. Joy of Nature Press. San Rafael, CA.
* Grater, Russell K. 1976. The Interpreter's Handbook. Southwest Parks and Monuments Association. USA.
* Ham, Sam H. 1992. Environmental Interpretation--A Practical Guide. North American Press. Golden, Colorado.
* Lewis, William J. 1980. Interpreting for Park Visitors. Eastern Acorn Press. USA.

* Regnier, Kathleen, et al. 1992. The Interpreter's Guidebook: Techniques for Programs and Presentations. UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc. Stevens Point, WI.
* Sharpe, Grant W. 1976. Interpreting the Environment. John Wiley & Sons. New York, NY. (Out of Print)
* Tilden, Freeman. 1957. Interpreting Our Heritage. University of North Carolina Press. Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
* Trapp, Suzanne, et al. 1991. Signs, Trails, and Wayside Exhibits: Connecting People and Places. UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc. Stevens Point, WI.
* Van Matre, Steve. 1972. Acclimatization--A Sensory and Conceptual Approach to Ecological Involvement. American Camping Association, Inc. Martinsville, IN.
* Zehr, Jeffrey, et al. 1992. Creating Environmental Publications: A Guide to Writing and Designing for Interpreters and Environmental Educators. UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc. Stevens Point, WI.

Many of these books are available throgh the same distributor:

* The Interpretation Publication and Resource Center
  P.O. Box 310
  No. Stonington, CT 06359
  1-800-328-4772

Other references to include in a basic Interpreters' Library include:

* Proceedings from past National Association for Interpretation Workshops. These contain summaries of many excellent workshop presentations from the years 1988 through 1992. Proceedings can be ordered directly from NAI, P.O. Box 1892, Fort Collins, CO, 80522.

Slide Files:

Color slides depict some of the most valued resources of our nation: our diverse natural landscapes. As a result, slides are an extremely valuable interpretive resource for our centers.

From our files, slides can be selected for use in new exhibits, brochures, and slide presentations and utilized by magazine and book publishers. When properly cared for they also become a record of our changing landscape. But if you don't know what you have in your file, how can you use it? And if you can't find what you need, or the slide you need has become damaged, what good is the file at all? It is important to develop a filing system that works for you and that protects your slides from damaging environmental conditions.

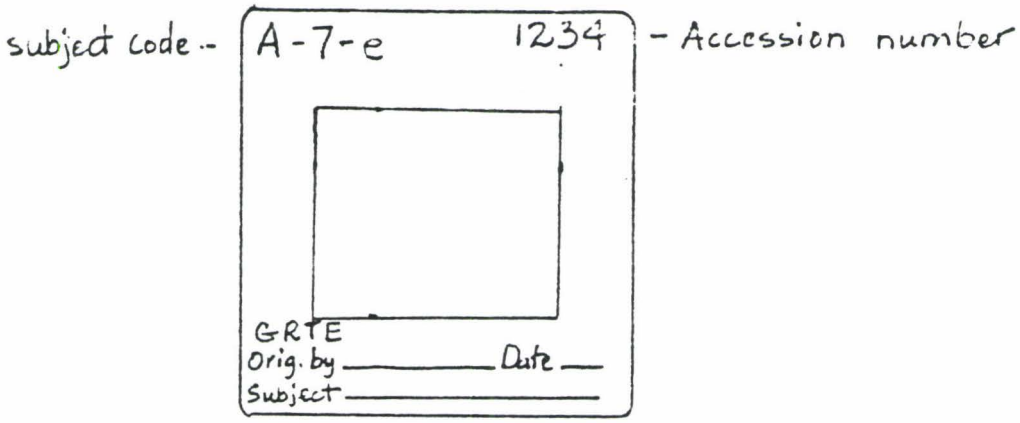
Following is a brief description of a slide file and operational procedure from Grand Teton National Park along with an adapted version of the same system from Mount St. Helens. Also attached is an article on the care and storage of color slides.

GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

Slide File - Operational Procedure

Please follow this procedure when using the Park slide file:

(1) The large Multiplex slide file holds viewer copies only. Each slide is marked in green ink with the photographer, date, subject, a subject file code, and an accession number. Example:



(2) When you find a viewer slide that you want to use a duplicate of, pull the duplicate from the 5-drawer metal duplicate storage box. The duplicates are marked in black with subject file code and accession number only. Duplicates are files by accession number.

(3) All slides - originals, viewers, and duplicates - are inventoried and duplicates restocked every other year. If all of the duplicates of a particular accession number are gone, let supervisors know and a dupe will be made from the original slide. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES TAKE THE GREEN VIEWER COPY FROM THE VIEWER FILE.

(4) If you remount a slide from the cardboard mount to a glass mount, you MUST transfer the subject code and accession number onto the new slide mount. We have pens available that will mark on the plastic Gepe mounts.

NOTE: THE VIEWER SLIDES NEVER LEAVE THE SLIDE FILE!!!

GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

Slide File - Subject Codes

A - PLANTS
- -1 Fungi and Algae
- -2 Lichens
- -3 Bryophytes and Mosses
- -4 Ferns
- -5 Fern Allies and Msc. Angiosperms
- -6 Gymnospermae
  - -a Cupressaceae
  - -b Pinaceae
  - -c Misc. Gymnosperms
- -7 Dicots
  - -a Aceraceae
  - -b Anacardiaceae
  - -c Apiaceae
  - -d Apocynaceae
  - -e Asteraceae
  - -f Berberidaceae
  - -g Betulaceae
  - -h Boraginaceae
  - -i Brassicaceae
  - -j Cactaceae
  - -k Campanulaceae
  - -l Caprifoliaceae
  - -m Caryophyllaceae
  - -n Celastraceae
  - -o Chenopodiaceae
  - -p Cornaceae
  - -q Crassulaceae
  - -r Elaeagnaceae
  - -s Ericaceae
  - -t Fabaceae
  - -u Fumaricaceae
  - -v Gentianaceae
  - -w Geraniaceae
  - -x Grossulariaceae
  - -y Hydrophyllaceae
  - -z Hypericaceae
  - -aa Iridaceae
  - -bb Lamiaceae
  - -cc Linaceae
  - -dd Loasaceae
  - -ee Loranthaceae
  - -ff Malvaceae
  - -gg Menyanthaceae
  - -hh Nymphaeaceae
  - -ii Onagraceae
  - -jj Orobanchaceae
  - -kk Paeoniaceae
  - -ll Polemoniaceae
  - -mm Polygonaceae
  - -nn Portulacaceae
  - -oo Primulaceae
  - -pp Pyrolaceae
  - -qq Ranunculaceae
  - -rr Rhamnaceae
  - -ss Rosaceae
  - -tt Rubiaceae
  - -uu Salicaceae
  - -vv Saxifragaceae
  - -ww Scrophulariaceae
  - -xx Urticaceae
  - -yy Violaceae
  - -zz Misc. Dicots
- -8 Monocots
  - -a Alismataceae
  - -b Cyperaceae
  - -c Juncaceae
  - -d Liliaceae
  - -e Orchidaceae
  - -f Poaceae
  - -g Typhaceae
  - -h Misc. Monocots

B - BIRDS
- -1 Loons
- -2 Grebes
- -3 Pelicans
- -4 Cormorants
- -5 Herons & Bitterns
- -6 Ibises
- -7 Waterfowl
- -8 Vultures, Hawks, & Falcons
- -9 Gallinaceous birds
- -10 Cranes
- -11 Rails & Coots
- -12 Plovers
- -13 Phalaropes
- -14 Jaegers
- -15 Gulls & Terns
- -16 Doves & Cuckoos
- -17 Owls
- -18 Nighthawks
- -19 Swifts & Hummingbirds
- -20 Kingfishers
- -21 Woodpeckers
- -22 Flycatchers
- -23 Larks
- -24 Swallows
- -25 Crows, Magpies, & Jays
- -26 Chickadees
- -27 Nuthatches
- -28 Creepers
- -29 Dippers
- -30 Wrens
- -31 Mockingbirds & Thrashers
- -32 Thrushes

-33 Gnatcatchers & Kinglets
-34 Pipits
-35 Waxwings
-36 Shrikes
-37 Starlings
-38 Vireos
-39 Warblers
-40 Weaver Finches
-41 Blackbirds & Orioles
-42 Tanagers
-43 Grosbeaks, Finches, Sparrows, & Buntings

C - ANIMALS
-1 Insectivora (shrews)
-2 Chiropters (bats)
-3 Lagomorpha (pikas, hares, rabbits)
-4 Rodentia (gnawing mammals)
-5 Carnivora (flesh-eaters)
-a Canidae (dogs)
-b Ursidae (bears)
-c Procyonidae (raccoon)
-d Mustelidae (weasels)
-e Felidae (cats)
-6 Artiodactyla (even-toed hoofed mammals)
-a Cervidae (deer)
-b Antilocapridae (pronghorn)
-c Bovidae (cattle & sheep)
-7 Reptiles
-8 Amphibians
-9 Fish

D - INVERTEBRATES
-1 Butterflies & Moths
-2 Spiders
-3 Others

E - ENVIRONMENTAL - ECOLOGY
-1 Natural
-2 Man related

F - GEOLOGY
-1 Glaciation
-2 All Other
-3 Paleontology

G - HISTORY

H - VALLEY SCENICS

I - TRAIL SCENICS

J - AUTUMN SCENICS

K - WINTER SCENICS

L - SKIES/ WEATHER

M - AERIALS

N - MOUNTAINEERING
-1 Climbers/Technique
-2 Peaks/Routes

O - VISITOR ACTIVITIES
-1 Summer & Fall
-2 Winter & Spring

P - I & VS ACTIVITIES
-1 Summer & Fall
-2 Winter & Spring
-3 Special Activities & Events

Q - RM & VP ACTIVITIES

R - MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES

S - PUBLIC BUILDINGS, FACILITIES, EXHIBITS

T - OTHER NPS AREAS

SLIDE INDEX

From: Mount St. Helens Visitor Center

I. GEOLOGY

A. MOUNTAINS, PEAKS, RANGES

1. Mt. St. Helens before

2. Mt. St. Helens after
a.West side b.South side c.East side d.North side

3. Other mountains

4. Peaks & Mtns. in NVM
a.Before b.After

5. Mt.St.Helens from L&C visitor center

6. Mt.St.Helens from Silver Lk. V.C.

B. MEADOWS, PRAIRIES, FLATS
1.Before 2.After

C. GLACIERS, GLACIAL PHENOMENA

D. RIVERS, STREAMS, CREEKS
1.Before 2.After

E. VALLEYS, BASINS, DRAINAGES
1.Before 2.After

F. WATERFALLS
1.Before 2.After

G. LAKES, PONDS
1.Before 2.After

H. STRUCTURAL GEOLOGY, LAVA FLOWS, CANYONS, GEOLOGICAL PHENOMENA
1.Before 2.After

I. METEOROLOGICAL PHENOMENA

J. ARCHEOLOGICAL

K. DOME & CRATER

L. BLAST ZONE/FUMEROLES/UPPER MUDFLOW

1. Blowdown Trees

2. Pumice Plain

3. Spirit Lake

4. Ryan/Meta Lake

5. RDA/Hummocks

M. FRINGE/SINGE/STANDING DEAD

N. CAVES *

O. ERUPTIVE ACTIVITY

1. Early, March-May 18

2. May 18

* Other B&W slides of caves are under IV-E

3. Since May 18

P. ASH FALL & BLAST EFFECTS

Q. MUDFLOWS & FLOODS

R. MAY 18 ERUPTION SERIES

II. FLORA

A. FLOWERING PLANTS

B. TREES

C. NON-VASCULAR PLANTS

D. PLANT COMMUNITIES

E. ASH & BLAST EFFECT ON TREES

F. SURVIVORS

G. LIFE RETURNING

III. FAUNA (MONUMENT/FOREST)

A. MAMMALS

B. BIRDS

C. FISH

D. REPTILES/AMPHIBIANS

E. INSECTS/ARTHROPODS

F. ANIMAL IMPACT/SIGNS (EVIDENCE)

G. FAUNA (OTHER THAN MNMNT/FOREST)

IV. HISTORY

A. STRUCTURES,& SCENERY, OLDER BLACK & WHITE SLIDES

B. STRUCTURES & PEOPLE, NEWER COLOR OF SPIRIT LAKE AREA

C. LOOKOUTS

D. ARTIFACTS/DOCUMENTS

E. PEOPLE & ACTIVITIES, BLACK & WHITE SLIDES

V. NATIVE AMERICANS

VI. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

A. BUILDINGS

B. VISITOR CENTERS

1. Spirit Lake Visitor Center (Pre 1980)

2. Yale trailer Visitor Center

3. Ridgefield Visitor Center

4. Old Lewis & Clark Visitor Center

5. New Lewis & Clark Visitor Center

6. Kid Valley (504) Visitor Center

7. Lewis & Clark Visitor Center, displays/display development

8. L.C.V.C. parking lot/parking lot paving

9. New V.C. (504)
   a.Construction (1)Interior (2)Exterior
   b.Exhibits

C. ROADS & BRIDGES

D. TRAILS & TRAIL BRIDGES/TRAILHEADS

E. CAMPGROUNDS/PICNIC AREAS/AMPHITHEATRES

F. CONCESSIONS

G. OUTDOOR SIGNS & DISPLAYS

H. PUMP SITE

I. CONSTRUCTION IN BLAST AREA (TRAILS & INTERP SITES)

VII. PUBLIC USE

A. HIKING
   1.Before 2.After
B. MOUNTAIN CLIMBING
   1.Before 2.After
C. CAMPING/PICNICKING
   1.Before 2.After
D. WINTER ACTIVITIES
   1.Before 2.After
E. WATER ACTIVITIES

F. VISITORS IN THE MONUMENT (ALL AREAS) PHOTOGRAPHERS

G. FISHING & HUNTING
1.Before 2.After
H. HANDICAPPED USE

I. HORSE USE
1.Before 2.After
J. VISITOR SERVICES

K. VISITORS AT V.C.
1.L.&C.V.C.
2.Silver Lake V.C.
3.Happenings (Dedication, spec. visitors, etc.)

VIII. MONUMENT/FOREST ACTIVITIES

A. FIELD PROGRAMS
1.Interp.talks 2.Interp.walks 3.E.E.activities
B. STAFF ACTIVITIES & TRAINING / SCIENTIST-STAFF TRAINING

C. RESEARCH
1.Geo 2.Hydro 3.Bio
D. V.C. PROGRAMS
1.Interp.talks 2.Interp.walks 3.E.E.activities
E. PLANNING

F. INTERPRETIVE SITES / VIEWPOINTS
1.North side (Rd.26/99 corridor) 2. South side 3.West side (Toutle Valley)
G. VOLCANIC MONITORING

H. SEARCH & RESCUE / EVACUATIONS / EMERGENCY

I. PERSONNEL & VOLUNTEERS
1.L&C V.C. 2.Silver Lake V.C. 3.Field
4.Detailers 5. Volunteers 6. PNNPFA 7.Youth Prog.

J. STAFF GET-TOGETHERS

K. PRESS

IX. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

A. AVALANCHES

B. BLOWDOWN OTHER THAN BY VOLCANO

C. HUMAN IMPACT

D. LOGGING / SALVAGE LOGGING

E. REFORESTATION/BURNING/FIRES

F. PUMP SITE/DEBRIS DAMS/TUNNEL

G. PHOTO POINTS

H. HAZARDS/PROBLEMS

I. EROSION

X. VISUAL AIDS (For slide programs)

A. MAPS

B. SIGNS/TEXTS

C. TITLES/CREDITS

D. ILLUSTRATIONS/GRAPHS/GRAPHICS

E. BLANKS (Black)/ ALLIGNMENT

XI. AREAS OUTSIDE THE MONUMENT/FOREST

A. LOCAL

B. WASHINGTON STATE

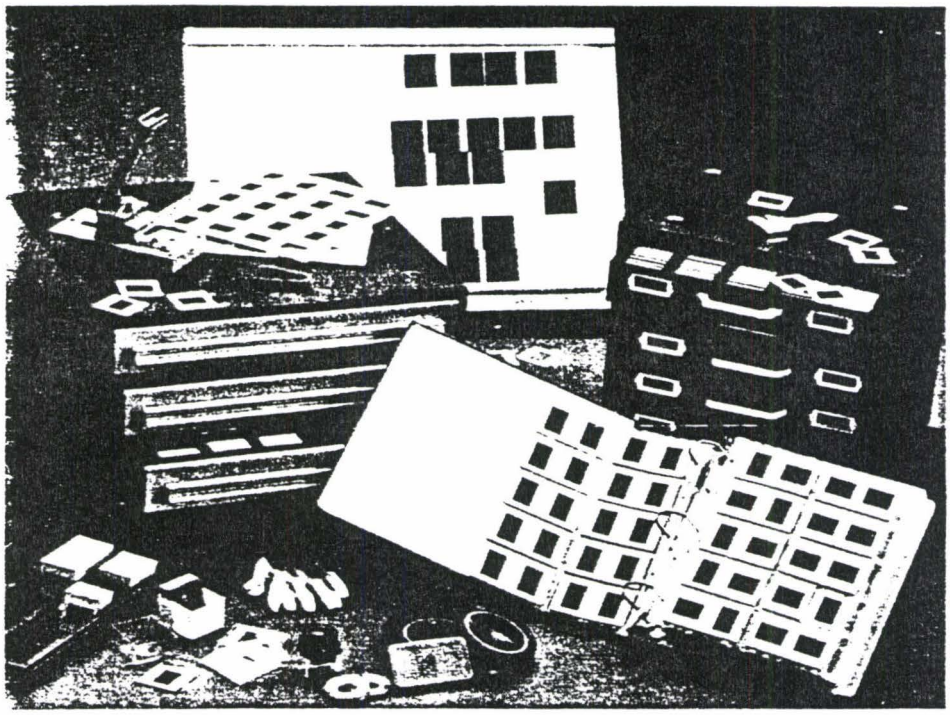
C. OTHER AREAS

D. OTHER VOLCANIC AREAS

XII. MISCELLANEOUS

CARE AND STORAGE OF COLOR SLIDES

Introduction



Like all photographic materials, color slides have their own particular storage requirements. The primary goal of any slide storage system is twofold: 1) to provide an environmentally safe storage area, and 2) to make slides easily retrievable. With proper care and storage, image deterioration is minimized, and your slide collection is organized and accessible.

To choose an appropriate storage system, you should be aware of some basic factors regarding the interaction of slides with their storage environment. For instance, did you know...

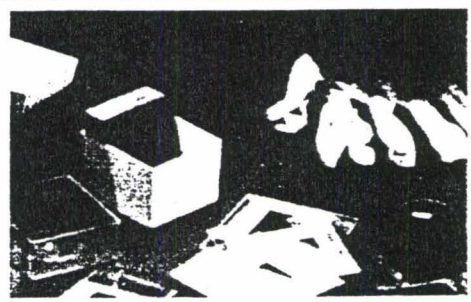
...that the popular polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pages break down to form hydrochloric acid and emit harmful fumes?
...that these pages can be readily identified by their strong "plastic" odor?
...that vinyl pages can leave a destructive oily residue and can also wrinkle, shrink, and stick to film emulsions, causing splotchy patches?
...that wood cabinets can give off vapors that are harmful to slides?
...that high heat, humidity, light and dust can have an adverse effect on color images?

Environmental Considerations

Because all photographic material is organic, it is affected by its environment, primarily temperature, humidity, and light.

■ **Temperature and humidity.** The basic temperature and humidity aim points are the same for most photographic materials, including slides. Room temperature (60°-70°F) is acceptable, with a relative humidity between 30 and 50%. Cooler temperatures are beneficial for slides, but be careful lower temperatures are not accompanied by higher humidity, such as in a basement.

The main culprit in environmental control is "cycling" or wide fluctuations in temperature and humidity. For this reason, do not store slides in basements or attics, or any area sensitive to environmental changes. Cycling creates a hospitable environment for chemical changes as well as the growth of fungi. Beyond 60% RH, the emulsion can swell, making it more susceptible to fungal attack and glazing from contact with the storage enclosure. *Remember: the cooler and drier the better, and keep it consistent.*



■ **Cold storage.** A word about freezing: this preservation method is sometimes recommended for long-term storage because the lower temperatures inhibit chemical reactions that may cause image deterioration. But before you start stashing your slides next to the ice cream, investigate recommended types of freezer storage, and most importantly, familiarize yourself with the proper way to remove slides for use. In general, slides must be allowed to "defrost" in their original storage bag until all condensation is evaporated. (For a discussion of cold storage for slides, see *The Life of a Photograph*, Keefe & Inch, Focal Press.)

■ **Light.** The color dyes in slides will fade if exposed to light for long periods of time. In projection, Ektachrome® holds up better than Kodachrome®, although the reverse is true in dark storage. As a general guideline, time your slides to change every 15 seconds. Not only will you hold your audience's interest, but you will also be protecting your slides from prolonged exposure to light.

■ **Dust.** Dust is also a major environmental concern. "Dust" encompasses many things: chemical pollutants, such as those from industrial and automotive exhaust; dirt, which is an abrasive; and fungi. To minimize dust, try to promote good housekeeping in your slide storage are wear cotton gloves when handling slid and use an air filtration system if possible.

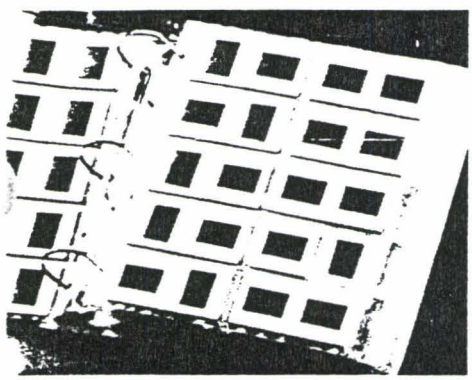
Always handle slides by their edges or mounts. Fingerprints can introduce acidic oils that could stain the image or promote fungal growth.

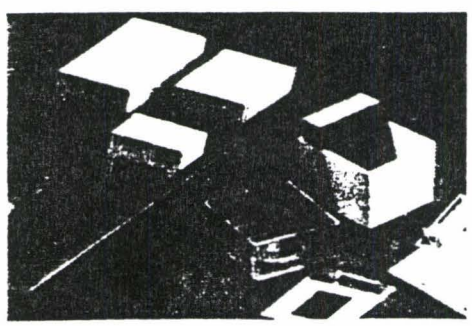
Storage Options

When planning your slide storage system, consider your needs and preferences:

- Are you looking for long-term storage or frequent retrieval?
- Do you use slides individually or in sequenced groupings?
- Do you prefer shelf storage or cabinets?
- Do you need small, transportable storage units?

For convenience, you may be tempted to store slides in the carousel-type trays used with projectors. Although there is nothing environmentally wrong with this—in fact the air space around each slide is probably beneficial as it deters fungal growth—storage in a carousel tray takes up the space of a couple of hundred slides stored by another method. Plus, retrieving slides one by one from the tray is more difficult and time-consuming.



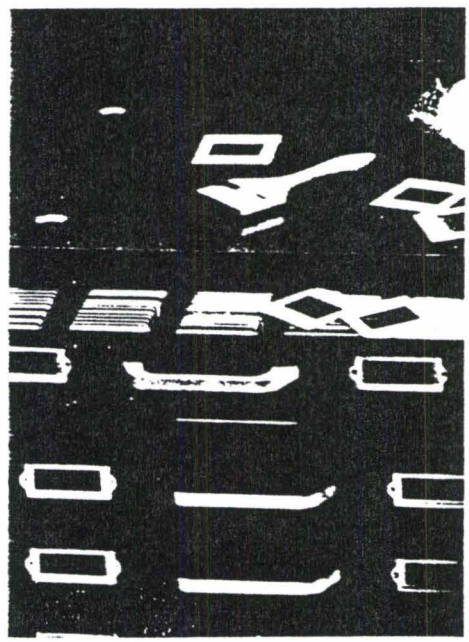


■ **Slide Pages.** Slide pages are easy to use, allow for expansion of your collection, and fit in both binders and filing drawers. You should avoid pages made from polyvinyl plastic; acceptable materials include polyester, polypropylene, polyethylene, and triacetate. Pages made from these materials vary in cost, with polyester ("Mylar") as the most expensive. Polypropylene pages have greater clarity than polyethylene, an important consideration when you want to view slides through the storage page. Most slide pages are punched to fit ring binders, and many will take a hanging rod for filing in standard filing drawers or hanging folder frames.

■ **Box storage.** Separate, small boxes made of metal or polypropylene provide safe and stable storage units. Some boxes offer removable drawers and dividers; others are designed to hold carousel loads of 80 slides.

■ **Cabinets.** If you're interested in filing in large capacity cabinets, select sturdy metal cabinets made of steel with a safe, baked enamel finish. Features often include removable drawers with individual filing position slots and index dividers to enhance your filing system. If you have limited space, the modular, stackable units are handy for compact storage of your slide collection. Avoid wood cabinets; the glues or varnish can give off vapors which are harmful to slides.

Cabinet systems are also available which allow filing and viewing in one unit. The systems lock together to create a variety of configurations. Each cabinet module contains holder frames for large-capacity slide storage. The viewer module holds frames securely for viewing and arranging slides.



Light Impressions specializes in safe storage and display products for photographic materials, documents, and works of art on paper. Write for a free copy of the Light Impressions Archival Supplies Catalog.

An information brochure from Light Impressions. Additional free copies are available upon request.

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LIGHT IMPRESSIONS®

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1-800-828-6216

Program Evaluation:

Evaluation of our visitor center programs is critical for determining whether we are meeting our objectives. Various types of evaluation tools have been developed. Following are three examples:

First is a program evaluation form used in the Mono Basin Scenic Area in California. It outlines some key elements to critique in an interpretive walk, talk, slide program, etc. When evaluating an interpreters' program remember to emphasize the positive and then build in constructive ways to strengthen the program.

Second is a critique process developed by the National Park Service for evaluating the availability and content of interpretive services offered at a site. It is inexpensive and can be completed in one day. Basic information on the evaluation process is included here. For additional information, contact the closest Regional National Park Office.

The third evaluation form is one dealing with accessibility. Once again, it is a form developed by the National Park Service and it simply identifies key aspects of accessibility and provides spaces for indicating whether each part of the program is or is not accessible. Completing this survey will give a clear indication of where accessibility improvements are needed.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM EVALUATION
MONO BASIN NATIONAL FOREST SCENIC AREA

_____
Interpreter

Date:_____
Program Title:

ent and control of visitors

_____Number and length of stops appropriate
_____Projection/sound equipment adjusted properly
_____Quality and pacing of slides

INTERPRETER

_____Mixed with group before presentation, rapport established
_____Did interpreter introduce self, Forest Service, and Scenic Area?
_____Uniform appearance neat, sharp, professional
_____Attitude (enthusiasm, genuine interest, approachability)
_____Poise (relaxed, self-confident)
_____Communication with entire group--could everyone see, hear, participate
_____Non-verbal communication (eye contact, stance, hands, gestures
_____Speech (Volume, tone, speed, pacing, gender inclusive language)
_____Appropriate use of humor
_____Empathetic interaction and involvement with children/teenagers, and special populations

COMMENTS

_____
_____
_____
_____

(continued on next page)

PROGRAM

Introduction (creates interest, intrigue, sets mood)

Theme (clear and unifying, appropriate)

Organization (clear sequence and continuity, objectives met. program supports theme)

Accuracy of information and depth of knowledge

Group involvement (relating to visitors' experience, provocation, standard interpretive techniques including questioning strategies, use of senses, application of Tilden's principles)

Forest Service Philosophy (promotes understanding of resource management practices including multiple use, management of public lands for all people, the multiple values of public lands, and/or management practices for the Scenic Area, recreation, and wildlife)

Conclusion (effective, well-paced, memorable, thought provoking)

Overall evaluation (including strong points and suggestions)

Self-Critique: A Tool for Evaluating Interpretive Services

What resources are required?

Personnel:

- An Evaluation Coordinator will need a maximum of four working days to prepare for, conduct, and report on the evaluation.
- Five to twelve employees from different divisions will be involved in a one-day workshop.

Equipment and supplies:

- Flip chart and pens
- Masking tape
- Pencils
- Calculator
- Photocopies of workshop materials

What are the results?

The results of the evaluation are 1) an inventory of the interpretive services offered in your park, and 2) a prioritized list of actions the park staff can take to improve interpretive services. The final report could be used to develop an interpretive plan or prospectus, serve as the basis of an annual report, or help park staff prepare for operations evaluations. Specific information on interpretative needs could also be helpful when making budgetary decisions.

How can your interpretive staff get started?

If you are interested in using the self-critique technique to evaluate your park's interpretive services, you may obtain the training package entitled **Self-Critique: A Tool for Evaluating Interpretive Services** from the Chief of Interpretation in your regional office. The training package consists of a video tape, a workbook and materials for the workshop. The package contains detailed instructions on how to conduct the evaluation.

Questions?

For more information, contact the Chief of Interpretation in your regional office.

National Park FOUNDATION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

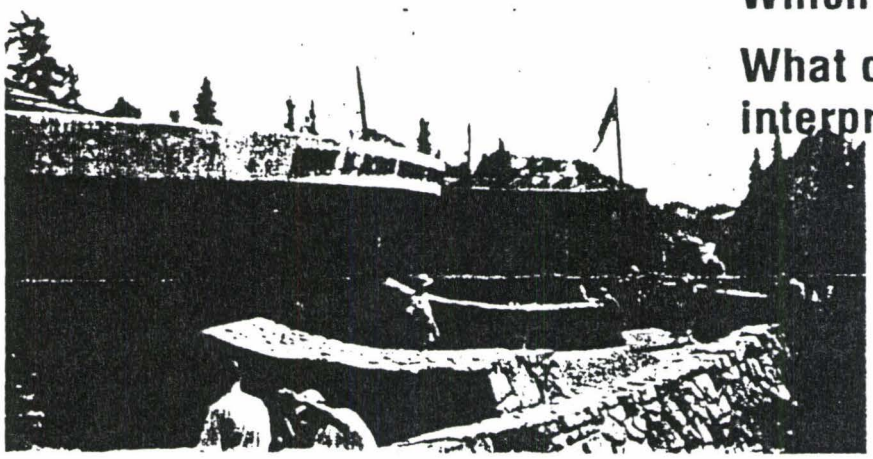
University of Idaho

Self-Critique: A Tool for Evaluating Interpretive Services

What types of interpretive services *should* parks provide?

Which ones *do* they provide?

What can park staffs do to *improve* interpretive services?



Evaluation addresses fundamental questions about the role and performance of interpretation and generates ideas for improvement. Some questions are best answered by the staff that is involved in day-to-day park operations. This brochure introduces a **self-critique technique** for evaluating interpretive services.

The National Park Service, in cooperation with the National Park Foundation and the Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho, is developing a series of training packages to teach NPS personnel how to evaluate interpretive services. The first package, entitled *Focus Groups: A Tool for Evaluating Interpretive Services* was distributed to all NPS areas in Spring 1991. The self-critique package is now available.

How does a Self-Critique evaluation work?

Park employees, including interpreters and staff from other divisions, are selected to participate in a self-critique workshop. The workshop inventories the park's interpretive services and answers specific questions about the availability and content of particular services. The group then develops a prioritized list of actions the park staff can take to improve interpretive services.

What are the advantages of using a self-critique technique?

- The technique is inexpensive; it does not require any special equipment or outside experts.
- The park's overall interpretive program can be inventoried and evaluated in one day.
- The result is a prioritized list of actions for improvemer
- Because it involves employees from each division, the

self-critique workshop encourages teamwork within the pa staff and can enhance communication between divisions.

What are the limitations of using the self-critique technique?

- This technique evaluates the availability and content, rather than the quality and effectiveness, of interpretive services. Another training package, *Focus Groups: A Tool for Evaluating Interpretive Services*, provides a way to evaluate effectiveness and quality.
- The success of a self-critique evaluation depends on cooperation from park staff and their interest in self-improvement.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

REGION CODE: **PARK/AREA NAME:** **SURVEYOR:** **TITLE:**

	N/A	YES	NO	COMMENT
I GENERAL PUBLIC INFORMATION				
A. Mobility Impaired: Do brochures, fliers, signs, staff provide descriptions of the park and its environs which would enable disabled visitors to know of the physical requirements and other aspects of specific park resources?				
Is information on the availability and location of accessible convenience facilities provided?				
B. Hearing Impaired: Do brochures, fliers, signs, staff provide information on the availability and location of alternative interpretive devices?				
Is there TTY-TDD capability at the site to provide pre-site information to deaf individuals?				
C. Visually Impaired: Do brochures, fliers, signs, staff provide information on the availability & location of alternative interpretive devices?				

	N/A	YES	NO	COMMENT
II MAJOR CONTACT STATION (Entrance Station, Visitor Center Information Desk, Roadside Information Booth, Roving Patrol, Campground Office)				
A. Mobility Impaired: Is facility physically accessible and, if not, is there an alternative location?				
Is accessibility information on the site, facilities, and programs provided?				
Is the International Symbol of Access visibly located at locations providing accessibility information?				
B. Hearing Impaired: Are all available materials and services (e.g. audio transcriptions, sign language staff) made known through prominent display of International Symbol for Deaf?				
C. Visually Impaired: Information provided in print — is it also available in:				
— audio				
— large print (18 point or ¼")				
— Braille				
III PERSONAL SERVICES (campfire talk, guided walks, talks, tours, living interpretation, cultural demonstrations)				
A. Mobility Impaired: Are personnally led programs conducted in physically accessible locations?				

	N/A	YES	NO	COMMENT
If not, does the park provide alternatives to enable visitors to experience the area through some other format (e.g., historic facility/site tour — a-v devices, photographic albums, rerouting visitor traffic, ramps at another entrance, etc.)?				
Do these program locations have accessible parking areas?				
Accessible support facilities (restrooms and water supply)?				
Is there an accessible path of travel from parking area/support facilities to programs areas?				
Are allowances made for wheelchairs in the program seating area?				
Are there any means of transportation (tour buses, trains, boats, etc.) used as part of the conducted interpretive program? If so, are they physically accessible?				
If not, are alternative means of transportation allowed or provided?				
B. Hearing Impaired: Is verbal interpretation available in print?				
Is there a staff member skilled in sign language interpretation?				
Does he/she wear the Service's official "I sign" pin?				
Are programs using sign language interpreters periodically scheduled and advertised during the season?				

	N/A	YES	NO	COMMENT
C. Visually Impaired: Are park interpreters familiar with the Sighted Guide Method to provide blind visitors with directional/orientational assistance, if needed?				
For significant landmarks, artifacts or displays requiring visual appreciation, do interpreters utilize descriptive and concrete language?				
During the interpretive delivery, does the interpreter include items that can be touched?				
IV SELF-GUIDING PROGRAMS				
A. Mobility Impaired: Are self-guiding programs located in physically accessible locations?				
Do these program locations have accessible parking?				
Support facilities (restrooms, and water supply)?				
Is there an accessible path of travel from parking area and support facilities to program areas?				
Does park have interpretive trails designed for accessibility?				
Does trail(s) have a hard surface which will allow for the easy passage of wheelchairs, as well as a minimum width of 48"?				
Does the trail(s) have an extended grade that does not exceed 5° (1 foot rise/12 foot run) with shorter grades not exceeding 10°?				

	N/A	YES	NO	COMMENT
On longer trails: (1 mile or 1 hour) are there sheltered rest areas?				
Do these rest areas include benches having back and arm rests?				
Is there an accessible convenience facility and water facility? (source)				
Is there a cut-off loop along trail?				
If there are barriers or walls along trail, are they low enough not to obstruct the overlook view for a visitor in a wheelchair?				
Does the self-guiding program include **printed** or **sign information** which relates the trail length, travel time, degree of difficulty, list facilities provided along the trail, and include any special precautions or preparations which may be needed?				
B. Hearing Impaired: For audio elements incorporated in a self-guiding program (e.g., cassette tapes, message units on wayside or indoor exhibits) — is the information also available in print?				
C. Visually Impaired: Park self-guiding materials — are they available in audio form?				
Do materials include such information as trail length, trail conditions, possible hazards and cues for that kind of information?				
Have cassettes developed for blind or visually impaired visitors been tested **on site** by staff and blind consultants before public distribution?				

	N/A	YES	NO	COMMENT
Is the taped program highly descriptive **in language** providing all the relevant park resource information normally acquired through sight (e.g. landmarks, overlooks, wayside stops, etc.)?				
Does the trail designed for accessibility have contrasting trail and walkway surfaces?				
V EXHIBITS, SIGNS, LABELS, PUBLICATIONS, A-V PROGRAMS				
A. Mobility Impaired: Are park's signs, labels and exhibits designed to be accessible to visitors in wheelchairs and with mobility impairments?				
Exhibits — Can exhibits be approached and viewed from a wheelchair with a maximum and minimum reading height of 65" and 54", respectively?				
Horizontal exhibits (e.g. models, relief maps, display tables) — Is the **bottom** surface a minimum of 30" from ground level to allow for a frontal approach?				
Is the height of the horizontal **top** surface designed to be viewed from an average eye level height of 48"?				
Items to be manipulated on exhibits (e.g. activating buttons, turnknobs, etc) — Are they mounted at a maximum height of 54" allowing a side approach and a maximum height of 48" allowing a frontal approach?				
Objects to be handled (e.g. books, publications, artifacts, relief maps, and tactile exhibits) — Are they placed at a maximum height of 48", minimum height of 9" from ground level, and within a 24" reach?				

	N/A	YES	NO	COMMENT
A-V Programs — are locations where movies, slides, or video programs shown physically accessible?				
If not, are there alternative locations?				
For inaccessible interpretive programs (e.g. self-guiding walks, tours, demonstrations, etc.) — has the interpretive message been filmed, taped, photographed or video-recorded and made available at an accessible location?				
B. Hearing Impaired: Is relevant park interpretive information which incorporates audio elements captioned or transcribed in print?				
If so, is it advertised?				
Auditoria — are headphones with volume controls, wireless, or infrared systems available for hearing impaired visitors?				
If so, is it advertised?				

	Captioned	In Print
Films		
Video		
Slide presentations		
Self-guiding cassettes		
Exhibit message units		

	N/A	YES	NO	COMMENT
C. Visually Impaired: Exhibit interpretive information — is it also available in:				
audio?				
large print (18 point or ¼")?				
braille?				
Exhibit design — is there use of adequate and even lighting?				
. . . high contrast colors on photographs?				
. . . non-glare glass?				
Interpretive labels — are they designed for maximum contrast (dark on light background or vice versa)?				
Display areas — is there use of 3-D relief maps, models, or actual objects that can be touched by blind visitors?				
Interpretive signs — are they routed or raised?				

Size of type	Viewing distance
¼"-½"	4'
⅝"	6'
2½"	30'
4"	60'

Membership and Involvement in Professional Organizations:

It is critical that National Forest Interpreters and Visitor Center Managers be involved with professional interpretive organizations. Contact and interaction with professionals outside of the Forest Service helps to promote information exchange and growth in our programs. We have much to share and we also have much to learn.

Among the outstanding organizations with which visitor center managers should be associated are the National Association for Interpretation and the Association of Nature Center Administrators. Both organizations have a great deal to share. Through them we have an opportunity to meet professional interpreters and visitor center directors from across the nation and learn ways of making our good programs even better.

The following pages provide information on these two organizations along with contact information for the American Association of Museums.

American Association of Museums
1225 Eye Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20005

(202) 289-9122

Memberships range from $35 to $125 per year

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR INTERPRETATION

A good interpreter is sort of a Pied Piper, leading people easily into new and fascinating worlds that their senses really never penetrated before.

-Yorke Edwards

What is the National Association for Interpretation?

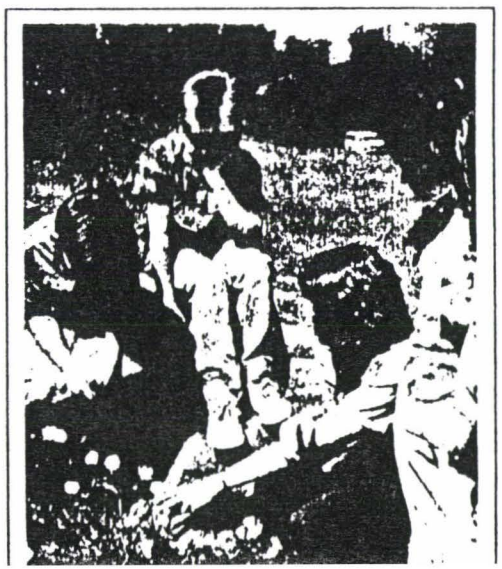
NAI is a professional organization devoted to furthering the goals of interpretation and to developing excellence in the delivery of interpretive services. NAI is proud to have a national leadership role in fostering professionalism and the highest standards in the interpretive field. NAI is primarily a volunteer organization. Its accomplishments are the result of the energy and involvement of its members.

Members come from a wide range of backgrounds. They are naturalists, educators, nature center and museum personnel, park rangers, tour guides, recreation specialists, writers, exhibit designers, cultural interpreters, administrators, and historians.

The organization is administered by an Executive Board and ten Regional Directors elected by the membership. An Executive Director manages the daily operation of the association. Membership in the national organization entitles you to participate in Regional activities. Some Regions have local *Chapters* that provide member services within a smaller geographical area.

Membership *Sections* provide specialized activities for those with unique professional interests, such as the Federal Interagency Council and Native American cultural interpreters.

For a complete list of Regions, Chapters, and Sections, contact the national office.



What is an Interpreter?

An interpreter is a communicator who combines an understanding of natural or cultural history with a love for sharing knowledge and feelings with others. They use the skills of an actor, teacher, and researcher in communicating information and creating educational experiences.

Interpreters are employed at parks, historical sites, museums, nature centers, zoos, public forests, resident camps, and anywhere educational and recreational opportunities are offered to the public. The specific duties of an interpreter are as varied as the sites at which they may work. Interpreters may, for example:

- conduct educational activities for school groups
- plan and present programs to the public
- re-enact historical occurrences or cultural lifestyles
- demonstrate crafts and skills and provide hands-on learning opportunities
- write articles, television, or radio scripts; or design slide presentations
- design trails, brochures, interpretive exhibits, and signs
- research flora and fauna or historical aspects of an area
- administer visitor centers, museums and interpretive services
- develop fund-raising events and programs

Many interpreters perform all of these duties. Interpreters are known for developing skills in a variety of areas to increase people's awareness and understanding of cultural and natural resource issues.

The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
-Freeman Tilden

Member Services

When you join the **National Association for Interpretation** you receive:

Publications

- Six issues of **Legacy**, NAI's official magazine, featuring articles on interpretive techniques, management tips, research, and resources
- Regional newsletters with articles of local interest
- Membership directory, listing names, addresses, and job titles of all NAI members
- Interpretive Consultants and Suppliers Registry listing companies and individuals serving the interpretive profession

Training Opportunities

- Annual National Interpreters' Workshop offering sessions on interpretive techniques, management, and research, as well as opportunities to visit interpretive sites in and around the host city
- Regional workshops providing skills enhancement and information exchange at a localized level
- Interpretive Management Institute providing mid- to upper level management training

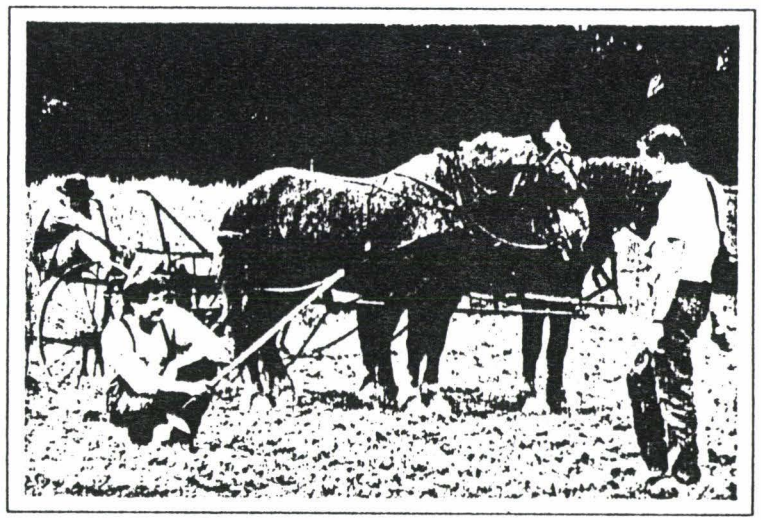
Awards and Scholarships

- National and regional awards programs recognizing professional excellence and service to the interpretive field
- National scholarship program for undergraduate or graduate students in interpretation or a related field
- Regional scholarship/grant program providing for educational and professional development

Career Development

- Access to the NAI Job Line and Intern Hotline, a recorded telephone listing of employment opportunities across the country, (updated weekly)
- Resume evaluation by experienced senior professionals in the field
- Access to NAI's resource library, containing NAI publications, conference proceedings, and other materials of interest to the profession

Successful interpretation is a balancing or juggling act, a graceful and smooth ballet of interaction between your interpretive presentation and the mind of the listener.



Other Benefits

Your membership in NAI is an acknowledgment of your professional status and your contribution to the future of the interpretive field.

In addition to the many services NAI offers, members are quick to recognize other benefits of membership, as seen in the candid comments below.

"NAI keeps me abreast of new trends... what fund-raising techniques are working for other organizations, for example."

"As an interpreter you are often tied to your site, and it is easy to get into a rut. Then I go to an NAI workshop and come back with all sorts of new ideas. I'm fired up again!"

"Through NAI, I made contacts that helped me find a full time position..."

"I consider professional development very important for my staff. Their attendance at NAI workshops has direct and measurable benefits."

"I'm the only interpreter at our facility. The newsletters and **Legacy** are my contact to the outside world!"

"When I see **National Association for Interpretation** on an applicant's resume, I know they are not only interested in a job, but in the interpretive field as a profession."

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR INTERPRETATION

NAI exists to meet the needs of those involved in discovering and communicating the meanings and relationships between people and their natural, historical, and cultural world. NAI's motto, "Sharing what belongs to us all", conveys the mission of interpretive professionals engaged in the challenge of facilitating this sharing process.

For more information about the National Association for Interpretation contact:

NAI
PO Box 1892
Fort Collins, CO 80522
303/491-6434
Fax: 303/491-2255

Cover photo courtesy of *South Bend Tribune* - Paul Kakestraw. Inside photos courtesy East Bay Regional Park District - Nancy McKay. Brochure design by Dragonfly Graphics.

How to Join NAI

Several membership categories are available to suit different professional needs:

- **Regular** - open to those individuals engaged in or associated with the interpretive profession.
- **Family** - open to two family members at the same mailing address. Members in the Family category each have full voting privileges in National and Regional elections. One set of publications is sent to the Family members' address.
- **Institutional** - open to federal agencies or non-profit organizations. Institutional members receive two sets of all NAI publications and *any* two staff members may attend training workshops at the members' registration rates.
- **Commercial** - open to for-profit businesses. Commercial members receive two sets of all NAI publications and a free listing in the Suppliers' Registry (see Member Services).
- **Life** - open to those choosing to become NAI members for life, and who wish to contribute their dues in a single lump-sum payment.
- **Supporting** - open to individuals, private organizations, foundations, or benefactors who are interested in furthering the mission of NAI and the field of interpretation.

Complete the enclosed membership form and send it with your dues payment (check, money order, purchase order, or VISA/MasterCard information) to:

NAI
PO Box 1892
Fort Collins, CO 80522
303/491-6434
Fax: 303/491-2255

If the membership form is missing or you need an extra

ANCA ASSOCIATION OF NATURE CENTER ADMINISTRATORS

ABOUT ANCA

An estimated 1,500 nature centers currently exist within the United States. Informal, regional networks have been established in various areas but as of 1988, no national organization or network for nature center administrators was in place to allow for broad exchange of information and ideas.

With the support of the National Institute for Urban Wildlife and the Edison Electric Institute, a market study was undertaken to examine the need and desire for such a group. The results of the study indicated an overwhelming desire for an organization that focuses strictly on the needs of the nature center administrator. The response to this demand has been the formation of the Association of Nature Center Administrators (ANCA) in early 1989.

ANCA is currently a program of the National Institute for Urban Wildlife and is striving toward the following goals:

* to establish a national network for nature center administrators,
* to promote the identity and credibility of nature centers as an educational function,
* to provide nature center administrators with products and services that will improve their performance on the job.

WHO MAY JOIN

ANCA defines a nature center administrator as an individual who provides the vision and leadership to carry out the administration and development of the center's missions, goals and objectives. Primary responsibilities include management of a facility, its education program, personnel, finances, marketing, and physical resources.

If you fit that description, won't you join us in promoting the profession as well as the individuals who comprise it? We'd like to have you on the team of dedicated nature center professionals who will be making a real difference in our futures.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

* four issues of DIRECTIONS, the quarterly digest for nature center administrators
* discounts on workshops and products offered through ANCA
* access to member information
* job information
* mailings from the National Institute for Urban Wildlife
* participation in the nature center administrator certification program
* annual membership directory
* results of the 1988 market study survey

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

$ 60 Individual Membership - available to individuals in the nature center administrator field.

$ 90 Institutional Membership - available to institutions who wish to designate their administrator and one additional staff person as members of ANCA.

Membership Application

Please mail this form along with your check, money order or purchase order to:

NIUW-ANCA FUND
c/o Dr. Robert A. Thomas
Louisiana Nature and Science Center
Post Office Box 870610
New Orleans, LA 70187-0610

Name: _____

Agency _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

FAX Number _____

Membership Category (please check one)

☐ $ 60 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

☐ $ 90 INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Administrator _____

Staff Member & Title _____

Make checks payable to:

NIUW-ANCA FUND

A membership package with additional information will be mailed to you as soon as your dues are received.

For more information call Bob Thomas at (504) 246-5672
or Tracy Kay at (914) 967-5150

Interpretive Sharing in the Forest Service:

Within the interpretive programs of the Forest Service, other federal, state, and local agencies, and private organizations there is a vast amount of knowledge and experience to draw from in the area of visitor center management. In order for all of us to continue to improve our programs, we need to communicate with one another, sharing our ideas and experience. Two valuable tools for keeping informed include connecting with the Forest Service Visitor Center Director's Mailing List and the Washington Office "Interp * Net" newsletter. (See Appendix H for informatin on how to join and use these services.)

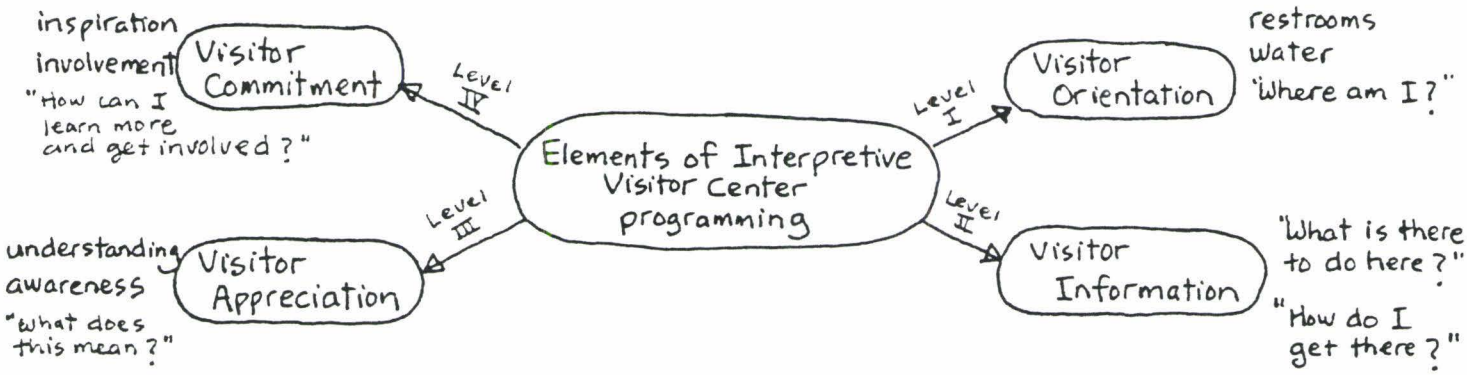
If you have something valuable to share or a problem you'd like assistance with, communicate with other center managers and interpreters through these networks. They work !

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Numerous valuable "tools" have been developed by visitor center managers to aid in operation and maintenance of visitor center programs. Consider the notebooks, plans, handbooks, and evaluation techniques discussed in this chapter. "Sharpening" tools such as these can help you to build a successful visitor center program.

Conclusion

Visitor centers have boundless potential! While some centers simply provide information and orientation to an area, their full potential lies in providing opportunities for visitor appreciation and commitment through a quality interpretive services program. This illustration shows the four key elements of a successful visitor center:



In order to succcessfully implement all four levels of a visitor center program, the center should be based on a theme. While all centers are organized around a "topic" such as "caves", "the volcano", "rivers" or "the historic site", a theme should also be established.

A "theme" is a message or statement about a topic. For example, a topic might be "rivers". A theme about rivers might be: "Rivers flow through our lives, bringing us abundant water, recreation, and inspiration." Centers based on themes rather than topics are most successful because once the central theme is established, all other concepts and ideas can be connected to it. This allows the formation of a message which becomes a meaningful whole rather than simply a lot of interesting but unconnected topics and ideas.

While it is true that some visitors may only be interested in and ready for a few facts or basic orientation, those who are ready for and open to broader connections and meanings should be able to find themselves in an atmosphere where new understanding of whole concepts can be revealed. It can be magical! Theme driven visitor centers can inspire people to new thinking and lanuch them on travels of discovery.

From the center's "dynamic front desk" and its sales items to its theater and telephone requests, a visitor center speaks its message with many voices. A visitor center manager's goal should be to assure that the message is universally accessible, allowing for phusical access, sensory access, and message access for all who come to visit. Further, the center director or manager should work to see that all the center's voices speak loudly, clearly, and in harmony with all the others.

Among the management strategies for implementing a successful visitor center program are the following:

** Staff, including volunteers, must all receive quality training in order to provide quality interpretive services.
** Base budgets must be properly requested, clearly justified, and wisely spent, while numerous "budget stretching" strategies, from book sales to donation walls, should be considered.
** Numerous visitor center management "tools" including operation and maintenance plans, blocked work schedules, and program evaluation techniques should be "sharpened" and used to help build the program.

Finally, managing a visitor center program with far reaching effects is a challenge which must be approached with creativity and a passion for excellence. In so doing, visitor centers can contribute to a renaissance in interpretation which will promote new levels of appreciation, awareness, and respect for our precious heritage sites and our spectacular natural landscapes.

Appendices

Appendix A	National Forest Visitor Centers
Appendix B	Interpretation in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Appendix C	Freeman Tilden's Six Interpretive Principles
Appendix D	Draft, Interpretive Services Training Standards USDA Forest Service
Appendix E	Excerpts from Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument's Interpretive Training Notebook
Appendix F	Regional Interpretive Coordinators Contact List USDA Forest Service
Appendix G	Information Center Service for Interpretive Services (R6INTERP) USDA Forest Service
Appendix H	Forest Service Visitor Center Directors Mailing List

NATIONAL FORES .TOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
ALASKA	Tongass	Mendenhall Glacier	Dedicated to the further knowledge and enjoyment of glaciers and glacial phenomena, the circular observatory provides a year-around view of the glacier and its effect on the environment. Guided walks by forest interpreters feature salmon spawning and glacialld succession. Exhibits and audiovisual programs focus on these themes and forest management.	Juneau Juneau RD Dairy Road Juneau, AK 99801 907-586-8800
	Tongass	Forest Service Information Center	Located in the City of Juneau's Centennial Hall Convention Center, this center has the theme of "Sharing Nature's Bounty" and has exhibits about the historical use of forest resources on the Tongass National Forest. Audiovisual programs, cultural demonstrations and exhibits interpret the cultural and natural history of the national forest and Southeast Alaska.	Juneau Juneau RD 101 Egan Drive Juneau, AK 99801 907-586-8751
	Tongass	Tongass Marine Highway	The staffing of the large (400 foot) Alaska State ferries as they sail the Inside Passage adjacent to the Tongass National Forest. Programs include talks, films, and exhibits on glaciers, marine mammals, bald eagles, marine navigation, forest management and Native cultures by forest interpreters. Programs are conducted aboard the Columbia, Malaspina, Matanuska, and Taku.	Juneau Alaska Region P.O. Box 021628-RCWR Juneau,AK 99802-1628 907-586-8729
	Chugach	Begich,Boggs at Portage Glacier	This visitor center has the theme of "Glaciers and their effect on landscape and life in coastal Alaska and Portage Valley". Interpretation includes a 200-seat theater with 35mm movie, an exhibit room on glaciers, wildlife and history, forest recreation and management, and a large piece of glacial ice on display from the Portage Glacier. The center is staffed by forest interpreters, and nature walks and ice worm hikes are conducted.	Girdwood (Anchorage-48 miles) Glacier RD P.O. Box 129 Girdwood, AK 99587 907-783-3242
	Chugach	Chugach Marine Highway	Staffing of the Alaska State ferries Barlett and Tustumena as they sail the waters of Prince William Sound by forest interpreters who conduct talks and answer questions about the cultural and natural features of the area. Themes include glaciers and glaciation, mining, fishing, marine mammals, bald eagles, marine navigation, and forest management.	Whittier Glacier RD P.O. Box 129 Girdwood, AK 99587 907-783-3242

NATIONAL FORE[illegible]ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
ARIZONA	Coronado	Sabino Canyon	An hour's drive, starting at the Sabino Canyon Visitor Center, takes the visitor from the desert shrub growth of the Sonoran Desert floor to the towering Douglas fir forests, high on Mt. Lemmon. Visitor center exhibits interpret the botany, geology, and history of the Santa Catalina Mountains.	Tucson xx RD
ARKANSAS	Ozark	Blanchard Springs Caverns	Orientation to Cavern geologic formations, and cave flora . and fauna.	Mountain View Sylamore RD P.O. Box 2779 Mt. View, AR 72560 501-269-3229
	Ouachita	Kerr Arboretum	Orientation to the flora and fuana along the Tahlimena Scenic Drive.	Poteau Ouachita NF P. O. Box 1270 Hot Springs,AR 71902 501-321-5202
CALIF-ORNIA	Near the Inyo	Inter-Agency Visitor Center	Orientation to local areas including natural and cultural history of the east side of the Sierra Mountains.	Lone Pine Interagency VC P.O. Box R Lone Pine,CA 93545 619-876-4252
	Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit	Lake Tahoe Visitor Center	The uses of various forest resources and the inter-relationship of the forest soil, water, flora, and fauna, in the Lake Tahoe Basin are explained in visitor center exhibits. An interesting nearby feature is the Stream Profile Chamber on the Rainbow Interpretive Trail which features a unique "fish-eye" view of a stream that is a key salmon spawning area. Open June through October.	South Lake Tahoe Tahoe VC Emerald Bay Road South Lake Tahoe, CA 916-573-2674

NATIONAL FORES ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
CALIF-ORNIA	Inyo	Mammoth	Audio-visual programs and exhibits bring to visitors' attention the many opportunities for outdoor recreation available to them throughout the year on the Inyo National Forest. Open 12 months of the year, this visitor center caters to skiers in the winter, fishermen in the spring, campers in the summer, hunters in the fall, and school children throughout the year.	Mammoth Lakes Mammoth Lakes VC P.O. Box 148 Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 619-934-2505
	Angeles NF	Chilao Visitor Center	Exhibits interpret local flora and fauna of the San Gabriel Mountains as well as cultural history. Of particular interest are displays on the Big Trees (Sequoias) whose southernmost range is on the Forest. A restored ranger station from the early 1900's is located at the site, and future plans include the restoration of an early lookout which will be moved to the site.	Glendora Chilao VC Star Route La Canada,CA 91111 818-796-5541
	Shasta-Trinity	Shasta Lake Visitor Center	Located south of Shasta Lake, the visitor center interprets water-based recreational activities as well as natural history. It is located adjacent to Interstate 5 with east freeway access. Open yearlong.	Redding Shasta Lake VC 6543 Holiday Road Redding,CA 96003
	Tahoe	Big Bend	This seasonally operated center interprets early gold mining activities, early Forest Service history, local Natural history, and local Native American culture pertinent to the Tahoe National Forest.	Grass Valley xx RD
	Angeles	Big Pines	This small center offers exhibits on local forest flora and fauna.	Wrightwood Big Pines VC P.O. Box1011 Wrightwood,CA 92397

NATIONAL FORES ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
GEORGIA	Chatta-hoochee	Brasstown Bald	Brasstown Bald Visitor Center, a unique building that was planned to reflect the natural beauty of the area surrounding it, rests on highest peak in Georgia. Exhibits interpret the history and topography of the southern Appalachian Mountains and the management of the Chattahoochee National Forest.	Blairsville Brasstown Bald VC P.O. Box 9 Blairsville,GA 30512 404-745-6928
IDAHO	Sawtooth NRA	Redfish Lake	Located in spectacular Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Interprets local human and natural history. Exhibits, photos, maps, audio-visual program, book sales.	Stanley Sawtooth NRA Star Route, Hwy 75 Ketchum,Idaho 83340 208-726-8291
	Sawtooth NRA	Sawtooth	Orientation to cultural and natural history and recreation opportunities in the Sawtooth NRA. Book sales.	Ketchum Sawtooth NRA Star Route, Hwy 75 Ketchum, Idaho 83340 208-726-8291
	Targee	Eastern Idaho	Interagency Center includes the FS, BLM, and Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce. Focus is on the recreation features in Eastern Idaho and Idaho Falls as a desirable place to live and work.	Idaho Falls Palisades RD 3659 W. Ririe Hwy IdahoFalls, ID 83401 208-523-1712

NATIONAL FORES ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
MICHIGAN	Huron-Manistee	Lumberman's Monument	Lumberman's Monument - History of logging in the Lake States with special reference to Michigan. Facilities include a heroic statue of a surveyor, logger, and river driver; a small visitor center with unique outdoor logging related exhibits and indoor interpretice association sales/service outlet	East Tawas xx RD
	Ottawa	Sylvania	The story of man's discovery and development of this land is depicted in a series of exhibits and audio-visual programs. Land uses are explained, beginning with the Indians and followed by the early fur traders, miners, loggers, and present day recreation users. Orientation to the recreation opportunities available on the nearby Sylvania tract managed by the Ottawa NF is also provided.	Watersmeet xx RD
MINNESOTA	Superior	Voyageur	Voyageur - (This visitor center will be torn down and replaced with a new facility housing the International Wolf Exhibit. Forest Service has relinquished ownership of the land but will be given exhibit space in the new visitor center. This no longer qualifies as an entry in the inventory and should be removed.)	Ely xx RD
	Chippewa	Cut Foot	A small Center off the beaten track with visitor information services and exhibits on the natural history of upper Minnesota. The exhibitry reflects that this is a major eagle summering and nesting area. The Forest provides outreach interpretive services to local resort requests and other scheduled events.	Deer River xx RD

NATIONAL FORE[illegible]ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
MONTANA	Flathead	Hungry Horse	The visitor center, operated jointly with the Water and Power Resources Service, affords visitors a view of the face of Hungry Horse Dam and the reservoir. An exhibit tells the story of water and the Hungry Horse watershed, from the time moisture falls as rain or snow, until water flows into the Pacific Ocean via the Columbia River. Conducted tours through the dam are available.	Martin City xx RD
	Clearwater	Lolo pass	Orientation to and interpretation of the beautiful Lochsa River area.	Missoula xx RD
	Gallatin	Madison River Earthquake Area	The story of the Madison River Earthquake and earthquakes in general.	West Yellowstone xx RD
	Lolo	Missoula	This visitor center interprets the activities of the Forest Service's nearby Aerial Fire Depot, Northern Forest Fire Laboratory and Equipment Development Center. The center offers a variety of exhibits. Forest Service smoke-jumpers take visitors on a tour of the Smoke-jumper headquarters and its three-story parachute loft.	Missoula xx RD

NATIONAL FORE[illegible]ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
NEW MEXICO	Gila	Gila Cliff Dwellings	The Forest Service and the National Park Service jointly operate this visitor center. The center exhibits tell the story of the Gila National Forest, its resources the Gila Wilderness, and the history of the Gila Cliff Dwellings. Outdoor exhibits interpret the geology and flora of the area.	Silver City XX RD
	Carson	Ghost Ranch Museum	Local wildlife and National Forest management are interpreted.	Albuquerque xx RD
NORTH CAROLINA	Pisgah	Cradle of Forestry	The story is told of the beginning of scientific Forest management in the United States.	Brevard Pisgah RD 1001 Pisgah Hwy Pisgah Forest, NC 28768
OREGON	Siuslaw	Cape Perpetua	The beautiful Oregon coast, where the forest meets the sea, is the theme of this visitor center. Exhibits tell about the climate, geology, plant life, and the ocean, especially the tidal areas. The history of land management in the Cape Perpetua area is explained. A film, "Forces of Nature," describes the influence of weather and other natural forces upon the land and the forest.	Waldport Waldport RD 1049 SW Pacific Hwy P.O. Box 400 Waldport, OR 97394 503-271-3611
	Siuslaw	Oregon Dunes NRA	Located in the NRA Headquarters this small center features exhibits about the features and management of the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area. Interpretive topics are dune ecology and management, outdoor recreation opportunities, marine life, and the history of the Oregon Coast.	Reedsport Oregon Dunes NRA 855 Pacific Hwy Reedsport, OR 97467 503-547-3289

NATIONAL FORE[illegible]ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
OREGON	Deschutes	Lava Lands	The story of the local volcanic activity is told through exhibits and interpretive trails.	Bend Fort Rock RD 1230 SE 3rd St. #A-262 Bend, OR 97701 503-593-2421
	Mt. Hood	Timberline Lodge	An excellent example of "WPA" craftsmanship is demonstrated in this lodge dedicated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1937.	Zig Zag Zig Zag RD 70220 E Hwy 26 Zig Zag, OR 97049 503-452-1335
	Mt. Hood	Multnomah Falls	Located at the base of a series of spectacular waterfalls, this center is located within the historic Multnomah Lodge. This center interprets the history and features of the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area and the trails and other recreation opportunities.	Troutdale Columbia Gorge RD 31520 SE Woodard RD Troutdale, OR 97060 503-695-2276
	Wallowa - Whitman	Hells Canyon	xx	Enterprise Hells Canyon NRA Rt. 1, Box 270A Enterprise, OR 97828 503-426-3151

NATIONAL FORES ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
PENNSYL-VANIA	Kinzua Point	Allegheny	Located on the Allegheny Resevoir within a major recreation area. It provides visitors with information and orientation to National Forest and Corps of Engineer lands and also serves as a major rest stop.	Warren xx RD
	Pinchot Institute	Grey Towers (National Historic Landmark)	Grey Towers wauntry home of the Gifford Pinchot, an early national conservation leader. Pinchot was the first Chief of the Forest Service and a two-term Governor of Pennsylvania.	Milford Pinchot Institute PO Box 188 Milford, PA 18337 717-296-6401

NATIONAL FORES ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
PUERTO RICO	Caribbean	Sierra Palms	Orientation to the Caribbean NF and the only tropical national Forest in the National Forest System.	San Juan Sierra Palma VC Road 191 K-8 Palmer, PR 00721 809-887-2875
SOUTH DAKOTA	Black Hills	Pactola	Orientation to the cultural and natural history of the Black Hills.	Rapid City xx RD
UTAH	Ashley	Flaming Gorge	Operated jointly by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Reclamation. Provides recreation information about the Flaming Gorge NRA and the Green River. Book sales.	Dutch John Flaming Gorge NRA P.O Box 157 Dutch John, UT 84321 801-885-3315
		Red Canyon	An observatory on a cliff offering a superb view of the Red Canyon portion of the Flaming Gorge NRA and the High Uintas. Exhibits, photos, maps, audio-visual programs, book sales.	Dutch John Flaming Gorge NRA P.O. Box 157 Dutch John, UT 84321 801-885-3315
	Uinta	Strawberry	Exhibit, trail, fish strip-stripping station, book sales. Explains interagency management of Strawberry resources--particularly fisheries. Interpretive Association sales outlet.	Heber City Heber RD P.O. Box 190 Heber City, UT 84032 801-654-0470

NATIONAL FORES ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
UTAH	All Forests in Utah	Utah Tourism & Recreation Info Center	Exhibits, electronic Recreation Opportunity Guide (ROG), free brochures. Interpretive Association sales outlet. Interagency operation by the FS, NPS, BLM, and State Parks & Recreation. Offers one-stop shopping for Salt Lake City visitors. Located near Utah Capitol Building.	Salt Lake City Wasatch-Cache NF 8230 Federal Bldg 125 So. State Street SaltLakeCity,UT84138 801-524-5030
	Dixie	Red Canyon	Temporary trailer center adjacent to Bryce Canyon NP (1/92). Interpretive Association sales outlet	Pauguitch City Powell RD P.O. Box 80 Pauguitch, UT 84759 801-676-8815
VIRGINIA	George Washington	Massa-nuttan	Orientation to the Massanuttan area of the George Washington Forest.	New Market Massanutten VC Route 1, Box 100 New Market, VA 22844
WASH-INGTON	Gifford Pinchot	Mount St. Helens NVM	Tells the story of the early human history, geologic history, and the recent eruptions of Mount St. Helens. The recovery and research after the May 18, 1980, eruption is featured. Located 5 miles from I-5 on Silver Lake with a view of the mountain. Multi-media slide show and many exhibits; including a and walk-in volcano	Amboy Mt. St Helens NVM Rt. 1, Box 369 Amboy, WA 98601 206-274-6644
	Okanogan	Early Winters	Located in an historic Ranger Station this small center features early human history and natural resources of the North Cascades. Includes interpretive association book sales.	Twisp Twisp RD 502 Glover P.O. Box 188 Twisp, WA 98856 503-997-2131

NATIONAL FORES ITOR CENTERS

STATE	NATIONAL FOREST	VISITOR CENTER	THEME AND DESCRIPTION	NEAREST COMMUNITY AND MANAGING OFFICE
WEST VIRGINIA	Monon-gahela	Cranberry	The visitor will find interesting exhibits based on the theme "Resources of the Forest"--among these are a diorama of the water cycle, a model of a coal mining operation, displays of wildlife found in the area, products of the forests, and a model of a forest area.	Richwood xx RD
	Monon-gahela	Seneca Rocks	Located within the Seneca Rocks-Spruce Knob NRA, this center tells the story of the human and natural history of the surrounding area and orientation to the recreation opportunities in the NRA. Interpretive sales outlet.	Petersburg xx RD
WYOMING	Ashley	Green River	Located on the west side of the highway to Flaming Gorge NRA. Orientation and introduction to the NRA through exhibits and personal contact. Interpretive Association sales outlet. Jointly operated by the FS and the Green River Chamber of Commerce.	Green River, WY Flaming Gorge NRA Ashley Natl. Forest Second Line Address Manila, UT 84046 801-784-3445

(revised 01/21/92 - N.HAGADORN:WO1C)

E	National Forest	VC Name	TE Use this space to desci ne visitor center theme, current programs, special feature, and description of interpretive services, partnerships and other items of interest. (use these lines for description)	Nearest Community Name of District First Line Address Second Line Address City, State, Zipcode ***-***-**** (phone)

DEFINITIONS
(adapted from FSM 2350.5)

Visitor Center: sites and facilities designed and managed to provide a broad range of interpretive services programs, services, and media. These facilities often have a natural or cultural attraction as a major theme, and provide services such as audiovisual programs, conducted interpretation, school group visits, and extensive exhibits. These facilities usually have a design and construction investment in excess of $1 million and require adequate staffing, operation, and maintenance funding for year-around operation.

Information Center: a developed interpretive facility offering a more limited range of interpretive services and staffing. These facilities often have the purpose of orientation to national forest or regional features, recreation opportunities, and management and should be located near urban areas, travel corridors, or areas of concentrated visitation. Design and construction as well as operation and costs are less than for visitor centers, and the opportunity for interagency and partnership funding is very high.

Information Office: includes those portions of administrative sites and offices that have been modified to provide forest or district information, collect user fees and provide basic information about the area. Usually located in Supervisor or District Offices, and may have a some exhibits and other interpretive services.

Interpretive Site: a site or location where interpretive signs, exhibits, or kiosks are located to provide visitors with specific interpretive information about and attraction or an area. Usually located away from offices or centers; examples include wayside exhibits, scenic byway pull-offs, interpretive trails, and wildlife/fish viewing areas.

Interpretation In The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

Primitive
- self discovery, sharing with close friends and family, limited social sharing with others, rely on knowledge
- no site facilities

Semi-Primitive Nonmotorized
- self discovery augmented by books, guides and maps, some social sharing with close friends, family and others, rely on knowledge and publications
- no site facilities

Semi-Primitive Motorized
- self discovery augmented by books, guides and maps, some social sharing with close friends, family, and others, rely on knowledge and publications
- no site facilities

Roaded Modified
- combination of self discovery and unstructured contact with FS employees usually not interpreters, some FS produced publications
- some simple on-site facilities such as signs, numbered posts, simple viewpoints, etc., using native, rustic materials

Roaded Natural
- Limited, structured, seasonal contact with FS interpreters providing guided walks and talks but in natural settings and in small groups, many FS produced publications
- A variety of simple to moderately complex structures and facilities such as interpretive trails, overlooks, amphitheatres, broadwalks, etc., using native and native-like materials.

Rural
- Frequent structured and unstructured seasonal contact with FS interpreters providing guided walks and talks in natural-like settings and in small to medium-size groups, partnerships with resorts, tours, etc., many publications by FS and others
- A variety of complex structures and facilities such as kiosks, contact stations, interpretive trails, small visitor centers, exhibits, overlooks, amphitheatres, etc., using quite refined, native-like materials

Urban
- Almost constant structured contact usually throughout the year with FS interpreters providing walks, talks, visitor desks, sales, etc., in created settings and in medium to large size groups, partnerships with resorts, associations, friends groups, etc., many publications by FS and others.
- A wide variety of complex facilities such as visitor centers, complex exhibits, display structures, large amphitheatres, book stores, etc., using highly-refined materials and technology

Freeman Tilden's Six Principles

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

2. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.

4. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.

6. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Washington Office | 14th & Independence SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

Reply to: 2390/6140 Date:

Subject: Interpretive Services Training Standards

To: Regional Directors

The Forest Service Interpretive Services program continues to grow in effectiveness and influence with our National Forest visitors. We appreciate the contributions that your staffs have made on behalf of this important communications program..

As the interpretive programs grow, so does the need for professional training and development standards for the people who conduct the thousands of programs for visitors every year about the natural and cultural resources that make up the National Forests. The forest interpreter takes information and makes it relevant to the visitor, which allows them to appreciate, and understand more about natural resources and their use and conservation.

A team of Washington Office and Regional Interpretive staff have evaluated existing and future interpretive training needs and put together an educational and developmental program for individuals wishing to improve their skills at interpreting the natural, cultural and historic resources of the National Forests. This training will give individuals wishing to remain in the interpretive profession the opportunity to move forward in their career. The interpretive training standards have been divided into four levels. These are levels of expertise related to experience and technical knowledge and are progressive from the least experienced to most experienced. We would appreciate your review and comment on these standards along with any recommendations you have for the implementation of a national training program for forest interpretation.

There are many trends that indicate the need for such standards. The growth of natural and cultural based tourism in the United States and to the National Forests continues to increase at a rapid rate. Each year, several new visitor centers are developed as a result of Congressional support for such facilities. The expectations of National Forest visitors for well trained, customer-service oriented staff need to be met. In addition, Forest Service programs such as Scenic Byways, Watchable Wildlife, Ecosystems Management, Passports in Time, and Partners in Interpretation require well-trained and professional staff to implement these programs. In all cases, it is the interpretive aspects that make these programs come alive.

We look forward to your comments and recommendations on the development of an effective training program for Interpretive Services.

Gerald J. Coutant
Chief, Interpretive
Services Branch
Enclosure

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES TRAINING STANDARDS

Level I - Beginning Forest Interpreter

* Up to three years of experience
* Seasonal/Volunteer/Partner/Permanant
* Up to GS-5
* Located at District or Interpretive Site

FS Orientation (Mission) (8 Hours)

This session would give the new forest interpreter basic information about the Forest Service history, organization and mission of the agency. It would address the public benefits and services that National Forests provide the American public. Contrasts and comparisions with other federal land managing agencies will be made.

Basic Communications Methods and Techniques (40 hours)

This session would give the interpreter an introduction to basic techniques in communications with visitors. It will include an overview to the most common interpretive media in use today, with examples.

Basic Interpretive Skills Workshop (40 hours)

This session will be an introduction to the principles, procedures, methods, media, plans and evaluation techniques used in forest interpretation. It will provide the new interpreter with skills that would allow better communication with the visitor. Skills in writing, speaking, photography, program presentations, leading an interpretive walk and staffing a visitor center will be included.

Universal Interpretive Program Accessibility (30 hours)

This session is related to better understanding of the needs of all visitors and how to plan and implement interpretive programs for them. It will include discussions of special populations and people of all abilities. Emphasis will be for people with disabilities, older visitors, children, and cultural groups. The concept of Universal Program Access will emphasize that interpretive methods and media that serve special populations are very beneficial to all visitors.

Orientation to Cooperative Associations (20 hours)

This session would provide orientation and understanding of the purpose and organization of both Interpretive and Cooperating Associations and their role in assisting the Forest Service to interpret the wide variety of resources on the National Forests.

Introduction to Environmental Education (20 hours)

This session would give the forest interpreter a basic understanding of the responsibility the Forest Service has to provide environmental education services to National Forest visitors. It will include an orientation to the Natural Resource Conservation Education (NRCE) program and its mission in the Forest Service.

Level II - Forest Interpreter

* Three to seven years experience
* Permanent or Seasonal
* GS-7 to GS-9, may be supervisors
* Located at District, Forest or Interpretive Site

Interpretive Area and Site Planning (40 hours)

This session would give the forest interpreter sufficient skills to develop practical Area Interpretive Plans encompassing a number of related sites; and to develop individual site plans including media prescriptions and message content.

Interpretive Media Design and Awareness (40 hours)

Forest Interpreters will gain understanding of the important role that professional design has in creating attractive programs and facilities. Criteria for the identification and selection of high quality design proposals for programs and facilities will be addressed.

Interpretive Writing (20 hours)

This session will develop interpretive writing skills that yield interesting, interpretive and creative scripts, text, and captions that appeal to target audiences. Exercises in writing of interpretive text for brochures, interpretive signs, exhibits and audio descriptions will be covered.

Customer Learning Styles (16 hours)

Orientation to the four learning styles and their implications for interpretive programs will be covered. Interpreters will gain appreciation of the diversity of learning skills people possess; and how to use this knowledge to develop interpretive media for target audiences. Exercises in developing a media plan for a site or program that uses all four learning styles will be covered.

Communications Theory/Psychology (24 hours)

This session will develop advanced skills in applying cognitive psychology and communications theory to interpretive programs. The way in which the principles of interpretation are supported by research will be discussed. The purpose of the class is the development of interpretive programs and media using these findings.

Exhibit Development (32 hours)

In this session, forest interpreters will learn the elements of design and writing necessary to plan professional interpretive exhibits. They will also learn to evaluate and critique proposed plans to ensure quality products.

Volunteer Recruitement and Management (16 hours)

This session will provide interpreters with the skills needed to plan, locate, recruit, and sucessfully implement volunteer programs to maximize the benefits to volunteers and their public service. Examples of successful interpretive volunteer programs and their operation will be examined.

Level II - Forest Interpreter (continued)

Management for Universal Interpretive Program Access (32 hours)

Obtain practical skills for accommodating people with an array of physical and mental challenges into interpretive facilities and programs.

X Contracting & Budgeting (24 hours)

Learn the basic rules of contracting interpretive program and facility design and development. Learn how to include interpretive projects and programs into the Forest Service Program Development process.

√ Visitor Center Management (40 hours)

Gain knowledge and skills in managing and budgeting of physical visitor center facilities and staff.

Involvement in professional organizations (8 hours)

Be a member of and take the lead in developing services/programs offered by a professional organization.

Interpretive Trainer (40 hours)

Gain proficiency in training other interpreters in basic program development and use of specialized equipment.

Visitor surveys (16 hours)

Learn "how to" conduct simple surveys that reveal the true informations/educational needs -- and the predominate backgrounds -- of visitors to a given unit; and to apply this knowledge to development of interpretive programs and facilities.

Level III - Advanced Forest Interpreter

* Seven to ten years experience
* Permanent
* GS-11, mostly supervisors
* Located at Forest or Visitor Center

Marketing & Tourism (16 hours)

An overview to marketing concepts, customer satisfaction and the role of interpretation in improving tourist/visitor experiences through tourism. An undrstanding of the marketing strategies and methods for working with the tourism industry will be discussed.

Interpreting Controversy (16 hours)

Discussion and examples of the role of Interpretive Services in presenting programs and facilitating discussions about controversial issues. The course will focus on the need for understanding of both sides of significant natural resource issues; including clearcutting, deforestation, biodiversity, prescribed fire, endangered species management, and others. Methods for forest interpreters to use to communicate these issues to visitors will be a focus.

Visitor Center Planning (40 hours)

A course in the planning, design, and contracting for major visitor centers: identifying the work, selecting the vendors, and delivering a finished product. Project management guidelines, work planning needs and alternatives for development will be discussed.

Living History Programming (16 hours)

This course will identify the methods, techniques and requirements for developing, implementing and evaluating living history interpretive programs. Several different kinds of living history will be discussed and evaluated.

Interpretive Association/Cooperative Association (24 hours)

This course will provide forest interpreters with the skills needed for the planning and management of two types of Cooperating Associations: Friends of the National Forests, and Interpretive Associations. It will include an overview to the various kinds of associations/groups, how they are organized, how they work, and how interpreters can best work with them to assure their consistent support of FS objectives and the Interpretive Services programs.

Program & Budget Management (16 hours)

This course will provide the understanding needed of the program management side of interpretation, and will include: undergraduates, staffing, training and development, project work planning, FS and interpretive budget overview, and working with other resource staffs to assure an integrated implementation of the interpretive services program.

Level III - Advanced Forest Interpreter (continued)

Evaluation Interpretive Programs (16 ~~days~~ hrs)

Orientation to several current methods of interpretive program evaluation and the advantages of each. Current research on interpretive evaluation will be discussed. Alternatives for evaluating evaluate interpretive programs, sites, and facilities to provide positive feedback on skill development and the improvement of all interpretive services.

Facilitator Training (16 hours)

Training in meetings management and facilitation to make meetings more successful through active facilitation. Discussion of the positive facilitating behaviors that achieve improved group effectiveness.

Regional Office Detail (to other Regions) (40+ hours)

A detail to another Region to assist in the management of the Interpretive Services program and to see how other Regions develop policy and implement the interpretive programs.

Inter-Regional Transfer (experience) (40+ hours)

This detail to another Region would be for the purpose fo gaining new experiences at different visitor facilities or Forests. It will provide the chance to broaden one's perspective of what works well in different interpretive settings (ie visitor center director exchange).

Review Team Member (8-40 hours)

Participant as a member of an activity or management review, especially with the goal of showing the role IS can play in solving management problems, changing behaviors, and building support for programs.

Level IV - Master Forest Interpreter

* Ten or more years experience
* Permanent
* GS-12/13/14
* Located at Forests, Regions or Washington Office

Detail with Another Agency (3 months to a year)

The master interpreter would spend 6-months to 1-year with another agency to improve their management techniques and understanding of alternative approaches to visitor services. Agencies inside and outside of the federal government would be considered (state organizations, Tennessee Valley Authority, Disney, National Park Service). It is expected that such a training assignment would expand the level of knowledge of both agencies.

Clemson type Short Course (40-120 hours)

Attendance of a several week "short course" on advanced recreation related programs and communication techniques. Programs like those currently held at Clemson University and Utah State and others would be available.

Washington Office Detail (40-80 hours)

The Master Forest Interpreter should spend two or more details in the Washington Office working on projects and task forces related to communications or interpretive programs.

IDT Planning Assignment (40+ hours)

This opportunity would provide the Master Forest Interpreter with an opportunity to serve as an ID Team member on Forest Plans and have direct input to the updating of Forest Plans related in their interpretive aspects.

Value Analysis Training ($) (16-40 hours)

Participation as a member of a Values Analysis (VA) team to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of interpretive programs and facilities being proposed. It will provide an opportunity to work with engineering and other disciplines on the review of contract and other documents associated with large scale interpretive developements.

Review Team Leader (16-40+ hours)

Serves as the leader of a program review for targeting interpretive programs (Functional Assistance Trips or Program Reviews). These reviews could include reviews of Forest or Regional programs, including those reviews related to cooperating associations.

From: Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument Interpreter's Training Notebook. Appendix E

CELEBRATING SACRED PLACES

THEME: Ancient wisdom and new discoveries from mount St. Helens lead us to a growing appreciation, love and respect for the earth.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES: The following objectives are aimed at supporting this overall theme as well as meeting the interpretive mission at Mount St. Helens.

1. Forest Interpreters will work in teams to increase assimilation learning at the workshop.
2. Forest Interpreters will understand the "connections" between Mount St. Helens and other volcanic areas, both in the Cascades and the universe.
3. Forest Interpreters will explore the concepts that increase awareness of global environmental concerns and conservation of resources worldwide.
4. The Forest Interpretive staff at Mount St. Helens will work in learning teams to understand the natural processes that continually bring change to Mount St. Helens linking the past, present and future.
5. This session will model exemplary interpretive techniques and styles.
6. The pace and organization of this workshop will encourage wellness and creative, ongoing communication.

This workshop has been designed to ensure that the forest interpreters will see, experience, and learn about Mount St. Helens through the eyes of the visitor.

A. General objectives for all sessions and training experiences. Interpreters will be able to:

1. Identify major roads, trails, and facilities; and know approximate travel/hiking times.
2. Visit another site, and stimulate visitors to ask questions.
3. Share their experience with other visitors.
4. Have fun!!!
5. Pack out personal trash and a little more.
6. Want to learn more.

B. Through this workshop intrpreters will be able to motivate/inspire visitors to be able to do the following:

1. Interpret new and old eruption features.
2. View, touch, and point out features described by interpreters.
3. Recognize the negative value of vandalism and will not vandalize signs, natural features and facilities.
4. See or read signs and not take pumice and other natural features.
5. Explain their positive and negative impacts.
6. Participate in a children's program.
7. Be involved in an activity with their parents.
8. Seniors, children, and differently abled people will be able to attend specially designed programs/activities.
9. Identify barrier free facilities.
10. Experience sensory interpretation.
11. Apply what they have learned here to other areas/places.
12. Resolve conflict among themselves and be considerate to others.
13 Plan another trip to Mount St. Helens.

"WORKSHOP AT A GLANCE"

TIME	JUNE 4	JUNE 5	JUNE 6	JUNE 7	JUNE 8
7:00 7:30	Pine Crk folks drive to V.C.	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00 8:30		Workshop Goals Thematic Interp with Dave Bucy	Drive to Meta	Prep time for 3 minute talks	Drive to Cedar Flats
9:00 9:30	Arrive & Mingle with V.C. folks Explore V.C.		Model Meta Lake Walk/themes/ Specialists	Present three minute talks	Ancient Forest Ecology with Peter Frenzin
10:00 10:30	Spirit Lake Remembered with Roland Emetaz	Info Desk Duty Roving Interp Learning Styles	Drive to Windy Ridge/Model Talk/themes/ specialists		
11:00 11:30	Model Map and Seisomo Talks Info Desk Duty			Customer Service with Roland Emetaz	Pine Creek Orientation
12:00 12:30	Drive to Cispus Bring Lunch	Lunch Mountains in the Making by Dan Miller	Lunch at Crater House	Lunch Cultural Hist. by Rick McClure	Lunch Model Lahar walk, themes Steve Brantly
:00 1:30			Arrive Harmony Falls/model walk/themes/ specialists	Poetry with W. Stafford	Mudflows specialists
2:00 2:30	Arrive Cispus Ropes Course	New Theories Challenge old Theories by Peter Frenzen	Drive to Cedar Creek/model talk/themes/ specialists		Drive to Ape Apes HQ orient.
3:00 3:30			Drive to Smith Creek/model talk/themes/ specialists	New Perspective in Forestry by Jeff DeBonis	Model Ape Cave Walk, themes, specialists
4:00 4:30		Learning Teams	Drive to Cispus	Learning Teams	Trail 2 Forests Mushy Hugs followed by excessive picture taking
5:00 5:30	Learning Teams	Dinner		Dinner	
6:00 6:30	Dinner		Dinner		
7:00 7:30	High Ropes Course				
8:00 8:30		Video (Dead Poets Society)	Storytelling with Jerry and Marrianne Creed	Informal Camp-fire Fun	

Monday June 4

7:00 to 9:00	Pine Creek Gnats drive to the Visitor Center.
9:00 to 9:30	Arrive at the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center and get to know each other.
9:30 to 10:00	Explore the Visitor Center. Catch the slide program.
10:00 to 10:45	Roland Emetaz presents "Spirit Lake Remembered".
10:45 to 11:00	Rest your brain, wellness activities with Todd.
11:00 to 11:30	Model Map Talk "Which Way?" by Rich Ray.
11:30 to 12:00	Model Seismograph Talk by Carol Cotton.
12:00 to 2:15	Drive to cispus with a lunch stop along the way (bring your lunch).
2:15 to 2:30	Arrive and register at Cispus Learning Center.
2:30 to 5:30	Ropes Course!
5:30 to 5:45	Learning Teams
5:45 to 6:00	Free Time
6:00 to 6:30	Dinner
6:30 to 7:00	High Ropes Course!!!

Monday, June 4

Program Time: 9:00 to 10:00

VISITOR CENTER DISCOVERY
EXPLORE THE VISITOR CENTER
(on your own)
(as a visitor)

STATEMENT:

Many visitors who come to the Visitor Center have about an hour. What do they experience? Here's your chance to "be a visitor". Catch a program in the theater, discover a new idea from the exhibits, think about the past and the future of Mount St. Helens.....

OBJECTIVES:

1. Experience the Center as "a visitor".
2. Enjoy the flow of our exhibits from early history through 1980 and right up to current research and monitoring.
3. View one of the outstanding a.v. programs on Mount St. Helens.

NOTES:

Did you know:

* The Visitor Center won a Presidential Design Achievement award in architecture in 1988. The award was granted through the National Endowment for the Arts.

* The 9-minute multi-image program shown in the theater won an international silver medal award for excellence in 1988.

Monday, June 4

Program Time: 11:00 to 11:30

WHICH WAY?
Model Map Talk
by Rich Ray

STATEMENT:

Relief models are valuable tools for providing orientation and interpretation for visitors. Which way do we go? What can we see when we get there? So what?

OBJECTIVES:

1. Interpreters will become better oriented to the NVM, its major land forms and geologic features.
2. Interpreters will understand 5 major effects the May 18, 1980 eruption had on the land and "which way" to go in order to see them.
3. Interpreters will learn three effective ways of using the relief model as an interpretive aide.

NOTES:

Monday, June 4

Program Time: 11:30 to 12:00

MODEL SEISMOGRAPH TALK
by Carol Cotton

STATEMENT:

Mount St. Helens is one of the most intensively studied volcanos in the world. A series of seismic stations are maintained around Mount St. Helens as part of the volcano monitoring system.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Interpreters will be able to describe how a seismograph works.
2. Interpreters will understand the basic procedures for operating and maintaining a seismograph.
3. Interpreters will be able to recognize 3 typical seismic "signatures" from Mount St. Helens.
4. Interpreters will be challenged to collaboratively create an earthshaking event of their choice.

NOTES:

REGIONAL INTERPRETER CONTACT LIST

Region 1
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USDA-Forest Service
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Region 3
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FAX 503-326-3096

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Renee Vandlik R.VANDLIK:R09A
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202-205-1228

Sharon Prell S.PRELL:W01C
National Forest Visitor Center Director
202-205-1414

[revised 07/13/92]

United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | RO

Reply to: 2390/6600 Date: June 11, 1992

Subject: Information Center Service for Interpretive Services

To: Forest Supervisors, CRGNSA Manager, and Directors

A new information center service (ICS) for interpretive services has been established on the Data General system in the Regional Office. The new ICS is named R6INTERP. The R6INTERP Information Center Service is essentially an "electronic library" which is designed to facilitate information sharing amongst those with an interest in interpretive services. It provides a centralized location for the storage of a variety of "reference" information pertinent to interpretive services and allows users from all sites to retrieve that information on demand. R6INTERP is also intended to serve as a clearinghouse, where information about what users at different sites are "doing" in interpretation can be deposited and shared with others. In R6INTERP, information will be filed in several "folders" organized by topic area. Folders will be developed to hold information on a variety of topics, including position descriptions, external training opportunities, audience analysis, key contacts, accessibility issues, interpretive planning, interpretive media, etc.

System managers at all DG sites in the Region may set up access to R6INTERP by following the enclosed instructions. Once access has been established, users at that site will be able to log onto R6INTERP and retrieve information by following the enclosed log-on/retrieval instructions. Though primarily intended to serve Region 6 users, individuals in other Regions will also be able to access information stored in R6INTERP.

Over the next several weeks, R6INTERP will be in a developmental stage as we determine the most efficient means of organizing information in the center. During this "construction" period, users are welcome to browse through the information center, retrieve information, and familiarize themselves with the operation of the center. Users from Region 6 who have material relating to interpretive services that they would like deposited in R6INTERP should send copies to R6INTERP MANAGER:R06B. Users who have comments or suggestions as to how R6INTERP might be able to serve them better should direct those comments to John Osaki (J.OSAKI:R06C) or Jim Pollock (J.POLLOCK:R06C). Questions about how to access and use the R6INTERP Information Center Service should be addressed to your systems manager.

/s/ Warren R. Bacon (for)

LYLE LAVERTY
Director of Recreation

Enclosure

HOW TO LOG ONTO AND RETRIEVE INFORMATION FROM THE R6INTERP INFORMATION CENTER SERVICE

How to access the R6INTERP Information Center Service:

Press the INTERRUPT key.
Choose 7. User Applications
Choose 2. Public
Type in **INFO_CENTER**
Choose 1. Standard

A screen similar to the following will appear:

FOREST SERVICE INFORMATION CENTERS

1.	SRC	(Software Reference Center)
2.	FSM	(Forest Service Manual)
3.	FSH	(Forest Service Handbook)
4.	R6GIS	(GIS INFORMATION CENTER)
5.	FAC	(Facilities Information Center)
6.	R6FSH	(R6 FS HANDBOOK)
7.	R6FSM	(R6 FS MANUAL)
8.	R6PNWFYI	(General Interest Information)
9.	Other	(Additional Information Centers)

Select R6INTERP from the list. If you do not see R6INTERP on the list, select **9. Other.** A window will appear. Type in **R6INTERP** and press **NEWLINE.** The system will then place you in R6INTERP.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Remember that when you are logged onto R6INTERP, you are operating on the "B" system computer in the Regional Office (R06B), not on your own system. R6INTERP is nothing more than a drawer on the RO's "B" system computer to which you have been given access. When you are "in" R6INTERP you may only VIEW and MAIL documents even though other options appear on the screen.

Obtaining a Hard Copy document from R6INTERP: In order to retrieve a hard copy document from R6INTERP you must first mail the desired document to yourself. When mailing documents from R6INTERP be sure to type in your full DG address (e.g. J.OSAKI:R06C). Log off of R6INTERP (following instructions below), go to your inbox and print the document you mailed to yourself the way you normally print documents from your inbox. If you attempt to print a document while you are still in R6INTERP, the document will end up being printed on one of the printers attached to the "B" system computer in the Regional Office.

How to get out of R6INTERP: To exit R6INTERP, press **Control/Shift Execute.** This will put you back to the Information Center menu. Press **Cancel/Exit.** This will log you off the RO System "B" computer and put you back into your own space on your own system.

HOW TO SET UP ACCESS TO THE R6INTERP INFORMATION CENTER SERVICE

As a Public Information Manager:

1. If necessary, create a new object in the IS Public Cabinet

   Drawer name: **MGT**
   Folder name: **SYSTEM**
   Object: **OTHER_INFO_CENTERS**

   Note: If the Drawer and/or Folder don't exist, create them with the default amount of space and other user access set to **+Read**.

2. From anywhere in CEO press the **Interrupt** key
   Select **7**, User Applications
   Run the public application **INFO_CENTER**

   Select the **MANAGE** option from the Information Center menu
   Select the **ADD** option and enter the following

   For R6DG
   Center Name: **R6INTERP**
   Remote Host: **R06B**
   Description: **INTERPRETIVE SERVICES INFORMATION**
   Center No: **(Accept default)**
   Press **Execute** and then **Cancel/Exit**

   Any user at your site who can use public applications in CEO now has access to the R6INTERP Information Center Service.

NATIONAL FOREST INTERPRETIVE SERVICES
"Sharing Is the Keynote of Interpretation"

Date: August 28, 1992

To: FS VC Directors Mailing List

Re: Mailing List Members

The response to the inquiry about people interested in being on a National mailing list for Forest Service Visitor Center Directors has been overwhelming (literally!). There are now over seventy-five people who have asked to be on the list.

What Is It?

The DG NAME:Addresses for the people on the list as of today are enclosed. Obviously, we do not have this many visitor centers or visitor center directors, but a number of people have high interest in visitor services and have been asked to be on the list. The intent of the mailing list is to provide a forum for people working in or with visitor centers to ask questions and to share information with others without worrying about Regional boundaries. The mailing list should only be used for information exchange--please do not use it to share non-related items and try to keep documents you send to two pages or so. Otherwise, you will get a lot of rejections and fill up many inboxes.

How To Use It

The way the mailing list is currently set up, **anyone** can send a message to the mailing list by sending a message to FS VC DIRECTORS:WO1C. This will send your message/question/document to everyone on the list--including yourself (this way you can tell if your message "took").

How To Join/Leave Mailing List

Right now, I (N.HAGADORN:WO1C) will manage the mailing list for additions or deletions. Send messages **directly to me**, and NOT to the mailing list. If your DG address changes, please inform me right away. Messages to mailing list members that get rejected because of "unknown addressee" will result in deletion of that name from the list. Don't hesitate to let me know if this mailing list is not your cup of tea--I'll be happy to delete members without question.

Will It Work?

Only if you make it work! This mailing list will not be a top-down network. While the Washington Office or Regions may have some things to add occaisonally, the viability of the network depends upon active participation by District and Forest people who have questions to ask, suggestions to share, or items of interest. We will evaluate the viability of the network after a few months and determine if it is worth keeping. If you feel it is, let me know.

Thanks for your interest in visitor centers and national forest interpretation.

NEIL R. HAGADORN (N.HAGADORN:WO1C)
Interpretive Services Specialist
National Forest Service Headquarters

FS VC DIRECTORS:W01C MAILING LIST CONTENTS
(as of 08/28/92)

N.HAGADORN:W01C
B.LIPPITT:R06F03D01A
D.MADDEN:R03F05A
M.FRANKLIN:R10F04D01A
C.CHRISTIANSEN:R06F21D05A
S.LEE:R06F01D01A
M.MORAN:R02F10D04A
D.STROCK:R08F13A
M.ENGMAN:R09F19D02A
A.DAVY:R09F10D03A
S.SOKOLAK:R09F04D06A
B.PEACOCK:R09F07D06A
N.BELT:R06F17D05A
S.MATHISON:R06F11D03A
H.HEATON:R06F03A
C.GEIGLE:R02F07D06A
C.CUPITO:R10F05A
ANN M HOUSSER:R03F01D07A
L.YOUNGER:R04F02D03A
F.DUNCAN:R03F12D06A
S.HOPKINS:R6/PNW
L.CAROLAN:R08F09D05A
J.QUIRING:R06F03D01A
M.COHEN:R08F05D05A
D.SNYDER:R06F05A
D.FRYBERGEREBY:R06F14D06A
S.HOECKER:R09F02A
J.ROBLES:R09F21A
A.CAREY:R04F01D01A
D.PALMER:R09F07A
M.TERZICH:R10F03D03A
M.CAVAIOLI:R05F04D54A
JEREE MILLS:R06F06A
D.HOLMES:R09F09D06A
Y.SCHMIDT:R09F09D06A
M.MARSHALL:R10F03A
T.HASTIE:R06F05D05A
D.HURLBUT:R08F10A

DEANNA DULEN:R05F04D51A
J.QUIRING:R06F03D01A
E.VOGT:R06F08D05A
B.CROONQUIST:R05F01D52A
G.BEAVANS:R08F12A
R.HILBRUNER:R06F22A
J.FOSBENDER:R09F10D03A
S.ALEXANDER:R09F10D01A
D.BLAKEY:R05F17A
J.ROHLING:R06F16D03A
G.PAGE:R03F01A
C.JENSEN:R06F01A
G.LUSSIER:R09F21D05A
G.HAKOLA:R06F01D01A
D.RICHARDSON:R08F02D12A
J.L.DEHERRERA:R06F16D02A
M.VANEVERY:R04F07A
C.KAHLOW:R03F05D04A
S.HAYMAN:R04F07A
D.WANNER:R03F09A
D.SAUGEY:R08F09D05A
D.MANNER:R08F02D11A
J.TROUT:R03F05D03A
W.WILLIAMS:R01D
M.MILOSCH:R08F11D59A
J.HUTER:R03F05D05A
T.MCCLUNG:R03F03D05A
E.FINKELSTEIN:R04F01D01A
P.MURPHY:R09F09D05A
J.PACKARD:R10F03D03A
GUEST3:R09F11A
J.KIMMEL:R03F09A
R.BODINE:R09F06A
R.VANDLIK:R09A
MAILROOM:R08F09D01A
JO ANNE DOLAN:R05F04D52A
J.CHRISTIE:R05F01D51A
K.YOUNGBLOOD:R06F21D02A

INTERP * NET
NATIONAL FOREST INTERPRETIVE SERVICES
"Sharing Is the Keynote of Interpretation"

Washington Office Volume 1 March 1993

WORDS FROM WASHINGTON

Interpretive Newsletter started to share ideas. The Washington Office has begun a simple, quarterly newsletter called INTERP * NET to share ideas throughout the Forest Service. Let us know what you think about the newsletter.

Staff changes in the Washington Office include Neil Hagadorn as Acting Branch Chief for Interpretive Services, and Mele Fong as Interpretive Specialist. Mele will be working on Interpretive Associations, visitor centers and networking. The Branch Chief position is expected to be advertised this summer.

Selling Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl licensed items: The Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention (CFFP) Campaign folks and have informed us that Interpretive Associations cannot sell Smokey Bear posters and other CFFP items that are printed by the Ad Council because it violates our agreement with them. It IS okay to sell gift items such as Smokey patches, dolls, hats, etc. that are ordered from catalogs and vendors.

Interpretive Partnerships being reviewed. We are working closely with the grants and agreements folks to review our existing partnership agreements and proceedures. Our main interest are interpretive associations and making sure that the Forest Service meets its requirements to provide leadership and monitoring of the program. This review will be of existing and needed policy, any additional authorities required and development of FS Manual direction.

TRAINING

Region 2 Workshop May 24-28: "Interpreting Ecosystem Management" will be held at the mountain campus of Colorado State University. Seminars include thematic communication, interpretive techniques, Banana Slug String Band, urban forests as a classroom, interpretive master planning, interpretation for trails and waysides, project wild and project learning tree, and teens as teachers. Contact Linda (L.Hecker:R02A)

National Association of Interpretation National Workshop November 17-22: "Exchanging Capital Ideas" is planned for Washington DC. Contact Julie Carroll, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Meadowside Nature Center, 5100 Meadowside Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20855, 301-924-5965.

MORE

VISITOR CENTER NEWS

Moratorium on New Visitor Centers has been announced by the Interior and Related Agencies budget subcommittee that funds FS. Because of the federal deficit, this subcommittee has announced it will not fund any NEW visitor centers and has directed the Forest Service not to pursue the development of any of these projects with existing funds without approval of Congress.

Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center dedication will be held on May 10, 1993. This new center is the culmination of many years and dollars. The Spirit Lake Highway is a spectacular drive that will lead visitors to the Forest Service's newest visitor center with a great view of Mount Saint Helens National Volcanic Monument.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

New Forest Service Interpretive Association listing has been completed. Many thanks for the assistance of the Regions in the updates. Please send any additional changes to Mele (M.FONG:WO1C).

Interpretive Association Reports Due on April 15th. This report on form FS 2300-5 should be prepared and submitted through the Regional Forester to the Chief for consolidation.

OPPORTUNITIES

Vacancies, details, and outreach will be listed in future editions of INTERP*NET. Send information to Mele (M.FONG:WO1C).

MOVING ABOUT

Gordon Williams is moving from Region 3 to Region 4: Gordon has accepted the Forest Recreation Specialist position on the Wasatch-Cache National Forest starting April 19th. He will have program responsibilities for developed recreation, trails and tourism. Thank you Gordon for your work as Regional interpreter for Region 3 and good luck in your new position.

GREAT NEW STUFF!

New Environmental Interpretation text is now available. "Environmental Interpretation: A Practical Guide for People with Big Ideas and Small Budgets" by Dr. Sam Ham of the University of Idaho is a great text for all interpreters. Order from North American Press, 350 Indiana Street-Suite 350, Golden, CO 80401-5093 by calling 800-992-2908. Price is $34.95 and you can charge to FS or other credit cards.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

Consider sharing articles, announcements, questions or bright ideas through INTERP * NET. Please submit a few sentences or paragraph in document form by June 14 to Mele (M.FONG:WO1C). Questions? Call 202 205-4995.

END